



# THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,808

THURSDAY 31 DECEMBER 1998

(1R50p) 45p

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**Don't let the year end with a bang**

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## MPs back Prescott over 'old values'

CABINET MINISTERS and MPs lined up yesterday behind the call by John Prescott and Gordon Brown for the Government to return to "traditional" Labour values.

More than half a dozen ministers and scores of backbenchers are understood to have welcomed the shift in direction after the resignation of Peter Mandelson.

The most senior minister to come out publicly behind Mr

By PAUL WAUGH  
Political Correspondent

Prescott was Margaret Beckett, Leader of the House, who suggested that the Chancellor may bring forward investment plans to combat the threat of unemployment next year.

In what some MPs described as a "bloodless coup", opponents of Mr Mandelson's aggressive New Labour programme seized their chance

while Tony Blair was on holiday in the Seychelles.

Calls for greater intervention in the economy and an end to close links with the Liberal Democrats reached a new intensity as the party took in the full impact of the Deputy Prime Minister's new alliance with the Chancellor.

Mr Prescott's call for "Keynesian" economics and more "substance" in government policy - in an interview in

yesterday's *Independent* - reverberated through Westminster as it became clear that the more unpopular elements of the New Labour "project" face the axe.

Downing Street moved to play down divisions yesterday and Mr Blair used his new year message to reassure voters that the New Labour programme was still on track. But after the loss of Mr Mandelson, the Prime Minister is facing stri-

dent calls to ditch his co-operation pact with Paddy Ashdown. The Lib-Lab deal infuriated many in the party as it offered the prospect of Liberal Democrats having a say in key policies such as health and education.

"Tony is looking increasingly isolated on the links with the Liberals. There is a new mood around and Prescott embodies it," said a senior party source.

Mr Prescott today issues his own new year message stress-

ing that Labour should be "staying true to its traditional values of social justice, strong communities and improving opportunity for all". He continues: "We have a record to be proud of, so let's get our message across to ordinary people, so they know what we are achieving."

Ken Jackson, general secretary of the AEU engineering union, normally a staunch supporter of New Labour policies, also praised Mr Prescott's

initiative. "Our members need real policies, not flashy presentation. Their jobs won't be saved by spin," he said. "The clear majority of party members have no interest in hopping into bed with the nearest Liberal. It's time to get back to our real priorities on health, education and jobs. We shouldn't be trying to forge new links with the Liberals because history shows that they do us no favours."

In his new year message, believed to have been brought forward to reassert his authority, Mr Blair says: "Of course, from time to time, the Government - like any - will suffer knocks ... But they come and they go. What stays is the sense of national purpose. What stays is the manifesto on which the Government was elected, a programme for reform and renewal. A programme which, line by line, we are putting in place."

## Wall of snow kills four on Scots peak

By KIM SENGUPTA and  
STEPHEN GOODWIN

THE BODIES of four climbers killed in the worst avalanche disaster in the Scottish Highlands were recovered yesterday.

Three others from the party of Venture Scouts survived despite being buried alive for almost 16 hours in freezing snow before rescuers reached them in the early hours of yesterday.

Last night, questions were being asked as to why the expedition at Aonach Mor in the shadow of Ben Nevis took place despite serious warnings of an avalanche.

Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, said that a detailed investigation would



Evening sun catches Ben Nevis yesterday after an avalanche on Aonach Mor claimed the lives of (from top) Ian Edwards, Emma Ray and Paul Hopkins, and colleague Matthew Lewis. Reuters, PA

be carried out. He added: "The loss of four young lives is a terrible reminder that Scotland's mountains - so often celebrated for their beauty - hold a treacherous partnership with the weather."

Mountain rescue experts described their astonishment that three of the party had survived

being entombed for so long under more than 3ft of ice. The perceived knowledge on staying alive through such a huge avalanche would now have to be changed, they said.

A hand sticking out through the snow, caught in the torch beam of one of the rescue party, led to the survivors being found.

They were taken down by a ski lift to hospital at Fort William where they were found not to have suffered serious injuries. It is believed the climbers managed to dig air pockets in the snow covering them. One told how she hunched through her hand to stop choking.

The climbers were all from

Kent and had known each other for years. All six were members of the Dartford Scout Fellowship, having been close friends since joining the Scouts and then Venture Scouts as youngsters. They were all described last night as "fun-loving" people who lived life to the full.

The dead were named as

Emma Ray, 29, and Paul Hopkins, 28, from Wilmington; and Matthew Lewis, 28, and Ian Edwards, 30, both from Dartford. The survivors are Steven Newton, 24, from Dartford; Sarah Finch, 25, of Longfield; and their local guide Roger Wild, from Fort William.

Mr Wild, the instructor, is

one of the country's most experienced mountaineers and ran his own school. He is also a member of the Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team.

The area had been battered by a force 9 gale and the Scottish Avalanche Information Service had issued a category 3 warning for the area, signifi-

ing a "substantial risk" of an avalanche when the party set off on Tuesday morning for the 4,006ft Aonach Mor.

At about 3.50pm they were engulfed by a wall of cascading snow. Mr Wild's wife raised the alarm after he failed to return by 10.30pm on Tuesday.

A hand in the snow, page 3

## Major heads honours list for peace Hostages tell of agony

JOHN MAJOR and the former US Senator George Mitchell are among the key architects of the Northern Ireland peace process to be rewarded in the New Year honours list.

The former prime minister is created a Companion of Honour, the highest honour available to the Queen, while Mr Mitchell receives the equally rare honorary knighthood bestowed upon foreign nationals.

But Tony Blair's attempt to use his third honours list to

By PAUL WAUGH  
Political Correspondent

mark the historic Good Friday Agreement ran into trouble when it emerged that leading nationalist politicians had turned down honours. Downing Street took the unprecedented step yesterday of revealing that members of the "nationalist community" had been offered awards but declined them.

It is likely that senior figures in John Hume's Social Demo-

cratic and Labour Party were approached, but refused because they entailed recognition of "the British Empire".

John de Chastelain, the Canadian general who co-chaired the peace talks, receives a Companion of Honour, and Quentin Thomas, the civil servant who first made secret contact with the IRA under Mr Major's administration, receives a knighthood.

Ronnie Flanagan, the Royal Ulster Constabulary's chief con-

stable, also becomes a knight.

The list includes high achievers from sport, show business and industry, but puts a strong emphasis on more "ordinary" public servants in schools, the NHS and community groups.

Robert Carlyle, the actor who starred in the hit films *Trainspotting* and *The Full Monty*, receives an OBE, as do the pop singers Dusty Springfield and Tom Jones.

Lenny Henry, the comedian and Comic Relief founder, gets

a CBE, together with actress Maureen Lipman and the former James Bond, Roger Moore.

There is a knighthood for Frank Williams, the Formula One motor-racing team boss, and MBEs for the boxer Prince Naseem Hamed and the snooker star Jimmy White.

Nigel Hawthorne, the actor who played Sir Humphrey in TV's *Yes Minister*, is knighted, as is Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate Gallery.

Honours list, pages 12-13

BRITAIN AND Australia are to demand an explanation from the Yemeni government after claims by survivors of a disastrous rescue attempt that its troops opened fire first, resulting in the deaths of four tourists.

Survivors of the drama told yesterday how they were used as human shields by their Islamic extremist kidnappers after government forces stormed their hide-out in al-Wadea, 175 miles south of the capital, Sanaa, on Tuesday.

By STEVE BOGGAN

Victor Henderson, the British ambassador, was due to meet the Yemeni Prime Minister and Interior Minister last night to seek an explanation for the forces' actions. The Yemenis had said earlier that they acted only after the kidnappers began killing hostages. Before the attack, Mr Henderson had insisted that no violence or rescue attempt should be made.

The Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, said his government would "vigorously" pursue the Yemeni government to discover what led to the two-hour gun battle in which three Britons, Ruth Williamson, 34, Margaret Whitehouse, 52, and Peter Rowe, 60, and Australian Andrew Thirk, 35, died.

Tension in the region eased slightly yesterday with the release of four Germans who had been held hostage since 6 December. Used as shields, page 4

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Imagine what we can do tomorrow.







IN THE INDEPENDENT ON FRIDAY

## Next morning you think 'How did we end up in a bowling alley with that horse?'

MARK STEEL VISITS AN ILLEGAL DRINKING CLUB IN SOHO

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH McRAE, ROBERT FISK, TERENCE BLACKER, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, ANNE McELVOY, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, MILLS KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH

## Brown misses launch of euro

THE CHANCELLOR, Gordon Brown, will not attend today's ministerial meeting to launch the euro, the Treasury said yesterday, adding that the event is purely "procedural".

Instead Britain will be represented by Sir Stephen Wall, its ambassador to the EU, when finance ministers gather in Brussels.

The event will include the announcement of the exchange rates of the 11 currencies taking part in the euro, which begins life tomorrow. Signing of official regulations will be followed by a champagne reception and the release of 3,000 balloons.

With Britain not taking part in the first wave, the event has been a presentational minefield for the Government. The Chancellor could not expect to enjoy a position centre-stage, but staying away could be interpreted as a lack of commitment to Europe.

In the event, Mr Brown will not be the only prominent absentee. Oskar Lafontaine, the German Finance Minister, is on holiday and his place will be taken by the former businessman, Werner Müller, an economics minister.

The Treasury believes that the finance minister of at least one of the three other countries

BY STEPHEN CASTLE  
in Brussels

not taking part in the launch will also stay away. All 15 EU finance ministers were invited.

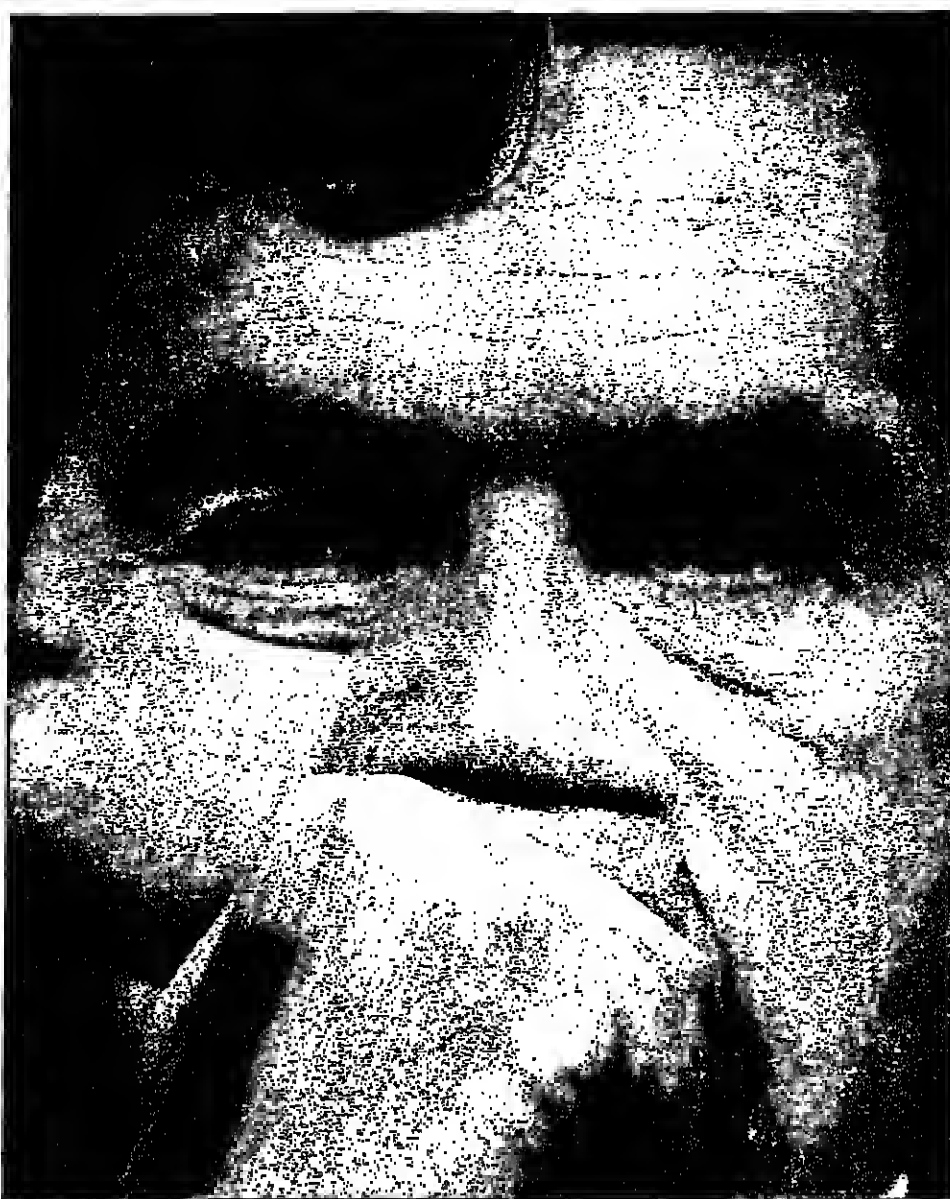
British officials in Brussels also pointed out that Mr Brown suffered a family bereavement before Christmas, making any prospect of his attendance more difficult.

A Treasury spokeswoman said: "This is just a presentational meeting and Sir Stephen Wall will represent the UK. The meeting is not likely to last more than an hour and there will be no decisions affecting Britain or other countries not taking part."

Nevertheless, today's celebrations have been given considerable billing in Brussels, where the arrival of the single currency is seen as a landmark, and Mr Brown's absence will be a disappointment to enthusiasts for British entry.

The European Commission has spent £25,000 to publicise the event when exchange rates will be locked and the power to set interest rates in the 11 countries taking part handed over to the European Central Bank. Notes and coins will not be introduced until 2002.

Countdown to the euro, page 14



Officials are playing down Gordon Brown's absence from today's event in Brussels

## Iraq attacks RAF patrol in no-fly zone

BY ANDREW MARSHALL  
in Washington

IRAQ FIRED missiles at a British aircraft yesterday, emphasising that it wants to step up confrontation with London and Washington after Operation Desert Fox.

The attack happened when RAF Tornados based in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were patrolling the "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq imposed after the Gulf War.

Iraq says both the southern and northern no-fly zones are illegitimate and that it will shoot down aircraft enforcing them.

United States and British aircraft were patrolling the southern zone at about 8.30am local time yesterday when an Iraqi battery fired between six and eight missiles from a site south-west of Tallil, in southern Iraq. Two US F-16 bombers responded and fired two anti-radar missiles and a number of precision-guided bombs on to the site. All the allied aircraft

involved in the incident returned safely to their bases in the Gulf.

Iraq, however, said it had almost certainly shot down a US or British plane over the no-fly zone. "Our brave air defences have fired ground-to-air missiles against the formation of hostile planes, forcing them to flee after one of the planes was almost certainly shot down," a military spokesman said.

The Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson, said the allies would not be "intimidated" from policing the no-fly zones by the Iraqi leader, President Saddam Hussein. "They [the no-fly zones] are humanitarian in purpose and we intend to maintain them," he told BBC Radio 4. "What we are seeing now is a show of defiance, arrogance and essentially of weakness on behalf of Saddam."

The incident was the second this week involving missiles, and follows the attack on US aircraft on Monday in the northern no-fly zone, near Mosul.

The US and Britain hit hard at Iraq's air defences during Operation Desert Fox, a 70-hour air campaign earlier this

month. But they admitted at the time that Iraq's surface-to-air missiles were highly mobile and many were missed.

Despite the threat to its aircraft, the US also said the patrols will continue. "This is a key element of our containment policy to prevent Saddam Hussein from using his aircraft to threaten his own people and his neighbours," said a spokesman for the National Security Council. "We will continue to enforce it and our aircraft will take the necessary precautions to carry out their mission and defend themselves."

Soon after news broke of the clash, President Bill Clinton spoke about Iraq to the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin. Russia has been critical of US policy toward Baghdad but both agreed that despite their differences "it is important to continue to build the US-Russian relationship", the White House said.

But in a sign that the clashes are worrying Iraq's neighbours and America's allies, Turkey said it wanted the issue to be handled delicately. "This is a sensitive situation for Turkey," said the Defence Minister, Ismet Sezgin. The allied air forces depend on bases in Turkey, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

## Pupils back inspections

EXPERTS AND teachers may doubt whether inspection improves schools, but pupils are more positive.

Nearly four out of 10 think that an inspection improved their school, according to a Mori survey of 4,000 11- to 16-year-olds. Boys in particular said they learned more in class after the inspection than before. A third of them noticed the difference compared with around a quarter of girls.

Overall, one in five pupils thought the standard of teaching was better after the inspection. Nearly seven out of 10 believed that it had stayed the same and only five per cent thought it was worse. The figures, however, include only those who noticed that their school was being inspected. While teachers and heads report that inspection is one of the most stressful and demoralising experiences of their professional lives, it appears to pass unnoticed by many of their pupils.

Fewer than half the pupils who responded to Mori's questionnaire were aware that their school had been inspected since they arrived. However, two-thirds of the children in middle schools knew the inspection had happened.

BY JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

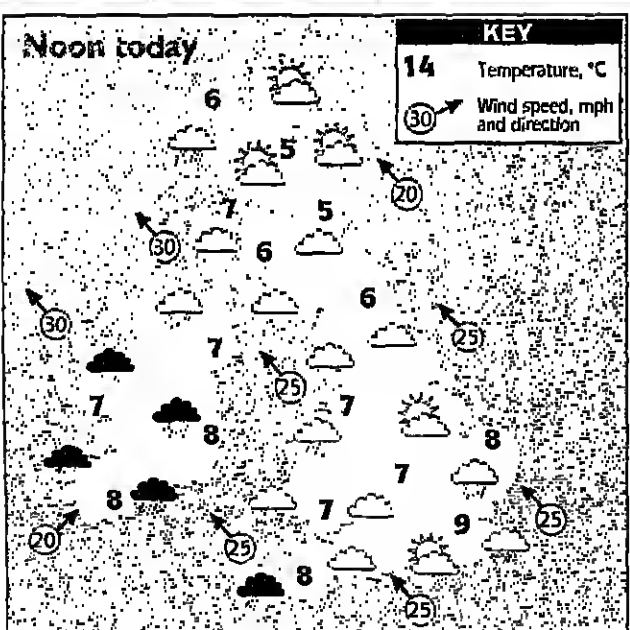
Younger pupils were less likely than older ones to have realised the inspectors were in school. However, the awareness of inspections among pupils is growing. Of those inspected last year, 84 per cent realised that the inspection had taken place.

A spokesman for Mori said: "Ofsted [Office for Standards in Education] inspections appear, on the whole, to have made a positive contribution to standards in schools, according to the views of pupils."

"Although the study did not directly address causality, the clear implication is that there is an association. In some young people's minds, between inspections and changes in teaching and learning. Inspections seem to help boys in particular with their learning, of particular note, given the recent debate about the relative performance of the sexes."

Mori also asked pupils' views about the amount of homework they received. Most, 58 per cent, said they were given "about the right amount" but a third said they had too much. Hardly any thought they were given too little.

## BRITAIN TODAY



## FORECAST

General situation: It will be another rather windy day. Most parts of the country will have a lot of cloud, although temperatures will be above the average for the time of year. Northern Ireland and western Scotland will be particularly windy with rain breaking out through the morning. This rain will tend to peter out as it spreads further east and central parts are most likely to see some sunny breaks. Eastern Scotland and eastern England will be generally cloudy with outbreaks of light rain and drizzle.

London, SE England, E Anglia, E & NE England: A breezy and mostly cloudy day with light rain and drizzle, especially towards the coast. A fresh south-easterly wind. Max temp 8-10C (46-50F).

Cent S England, Midlands, Cent N England: A few sunny breaks are possible but it will be generally cloudy with the odd shower breaking out. A fresh south-easterly wind. Max temp 8-10C (46-50F).

Channel Is, SW England, Wales, NW England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: Mostly cloudy all day and quite windy with rain breaking out by the afternoon. A fresh to strong south-easterly wind. Max temp 6-8C (43-48F).

NE & SE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, N Isles: A lot of cloud around, with some outbreaks of rain and drizzle and only limited sunny breaks. A fresh south-easterly wind. Max temp 5-8C (41-46F).

NW & SW Scotland, Glasgow, W Isles: Early sunny spells, but windy with rain soon arriving, some of it heavy. A strong to gale force south-easterly wind. Max temp 5-8C (43-48F).

N Ireland: A wet and very windy day. The rain will be heavy at times, but will lift (with more showers later). A strong to gale force south-easterly wind. Max temp 7-9C (45-48F).

## OUTLOOK

The east will have further cloud and drizzle on New Year's Day. The west will see sunnier spells and showers. Saturday will become windy, with rain clearing eastwards to leave it mild but breezy and showery. More rain is likely on Sunday.

## TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 31st December 1999. Cambridge: A10 between Foston and M11. Roadworks and bridge maintenance work at Shepreth M8. Until 14th February. Buckinghamshire: M40 between junctions 14 (A525) & 15 (Wycombe East). Three narrow lanes both ways and a 50 mph speed limit in force. Until 1st January. Bristol: M5 J18-19. Major Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001. Monmouthshire: A466 between Uth & A472 and M4 J24. Roadworks. Until 11th January.

## LIGHTING UP

	4.07pm	to	8.46am
Belfast	4.07pm	to	8.18am
Birmingham	4.11pm	to	8.16am
Bristol	3.52pm	to	8.48am
Glasgow	4.01pm	to	8.06am
Manchester	3.59pm	to	8.25am
Newcastle	3.47pm	to	8.31am

## HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Avonmouth	9.12	12.4	5.44	12.8
Cork	3.35	4.3	4.02	4.4
Dunfermline	3.42	5.2	4.12	5.2
Dover	9.04	6.5	8.38	6.5
Dun Laoghaire	9.53	4.2	10.09	4.3
Falmouth	3.13	5.0	3.43	5.0
Glenrock	10.40	3.4	11.15	3.4
Harwich	9.56	3.8	10.34	3.9
Holyhead	8.35	5.4	8.55	5.4
Hull (Albert Dock)	4.12	8.4	4.54	8.4
King's Lynn	4.13	6.4	4.56	6.4
Leth	12.23	5.4	12.57	5.5
Liverpool	9.25	9.0	9.49	9.3
Milford Haven	4.20	6.5	4.47	6.7
Newquay	3.15	6.6	3.41	6.7
Portlaoine	4.38	2.0	5.06	1.9
Purtonmouth	9.50	4.7	10.02	4.8
Redoubt	5.21	4.6	5.46	4.8
Scarborough	2.00	5.6	2.34	5.6
Wick	9.36	3.5	9.56	3.6

## AIR QUALITY

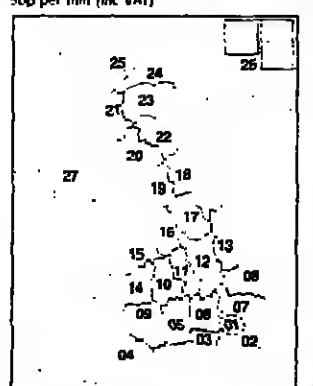
	NO <sub>2</sub>	SO <sub>2</sub>
London	Moderate	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

## SUN &amp; MOON

Sun rises:	08.06
Sun sets:	16.01
Moon rises:	14.59
Moon sets:	05.48
Full moon:	January 2, 1999

## WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts dial 0851 5009 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).



## YESTERDAY

Hottest: London 12C (54F)  
Coldest (day): Caister-on-Sea (43F)  
Wettest: Tullach Bridge 1.00 ins  
Sunniest: Arragh 5.0 hrs  
For 24hrs to 2pm Wednesday

## EXTREMES

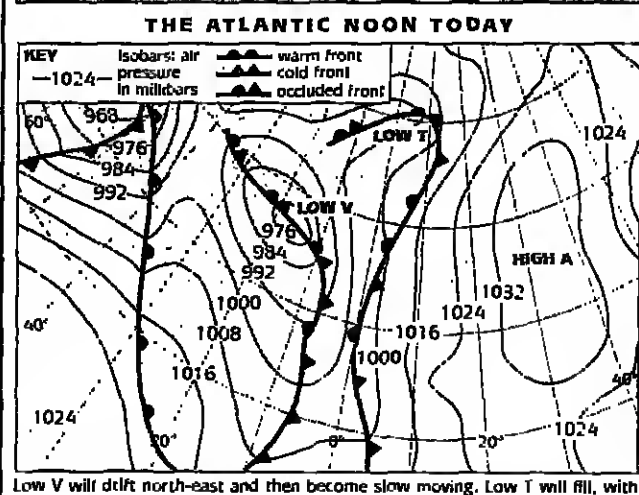
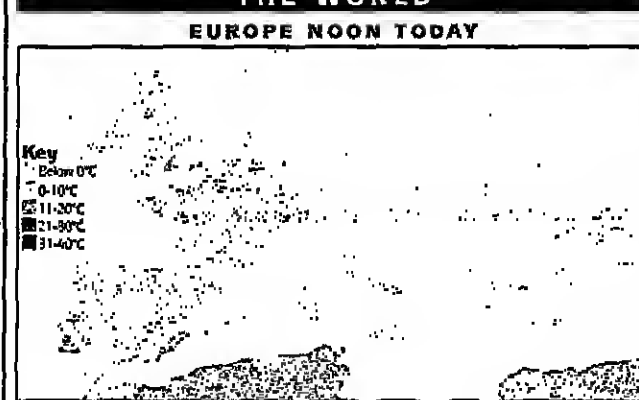
	Sun	Rain	Max	Min
Aberdeen	0	0	7	4.5
Anglesey	0	0.03	9	4.8
Aylesbury	0	0.01	5	4.1
Belfast	0	0.3	7	4.5
Birmingham	0	0	6	4.3
Bournemouth	0	0.01	9	4.8
Bristol	0	0	9	4.8
Cardiff	0	0.02	9	4.8
Cardigan	0	0	7	4.5
Carmarthen	0	0	6	4.3
Cromer	0	0	6	4.3
Edinburgh	0	0	5	4.1
Exmouth	0	0.01	10	5.0
Fishguard	0	0.05	7	4.5
Folkestone	0	0.02	8	4.6
Glasgow	0	0.01	6	4.3
Hastings	0	0.06	9	4.8
Howe	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Isle of Man	0	0.18	8	4.6
Isle of Wight	0	0.04	9	4.8
Kendal	0	0	6	4.3
Leeds	0	0.13	6	4.3
Lerwick	0	0	6	4.3
Litlington	0	0	6	4.3
London	0	0	6	4.6
Lowestoft	0	0	7	4.5
Manchester	0	0	7	4.5
Marazion	0	0.01	7	4.5
Morecambe	0	0.02	7	4.5
Newcastle	0	0	5	4.1
Newquay	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Norwich	0	0	7	4.5
Oxford	0	0	7	4.5
Ross-on-Wye	0	0	8	4.6
Salcombe	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Scarborough	0	0	5	4.1
Sheffield	0	0	7	4.5
Southport	0	0.01	7	4.5
Stamford	0	0.15	7	4.5
Swansea	0	0.01	10	5.0
Tenby	0	0.05	10	5.0
Torquay	0	0.05	11	5.2
Wexham-Marens	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Weymouth	0	0.07	10	5.0

24 hours to 6pm (GMT) Tuesday: Information by PA WeatherCentre

## RAIN OR SHINE...

A COVEN of witches and wizards will use their magical powers tonight to try and change Moscow's unseasonably mild weather and bring snow. Sorcerers are to gather in Red Square with barrels of ice-cold water which they plan to whack with their broomsticks.

## THE WORLD

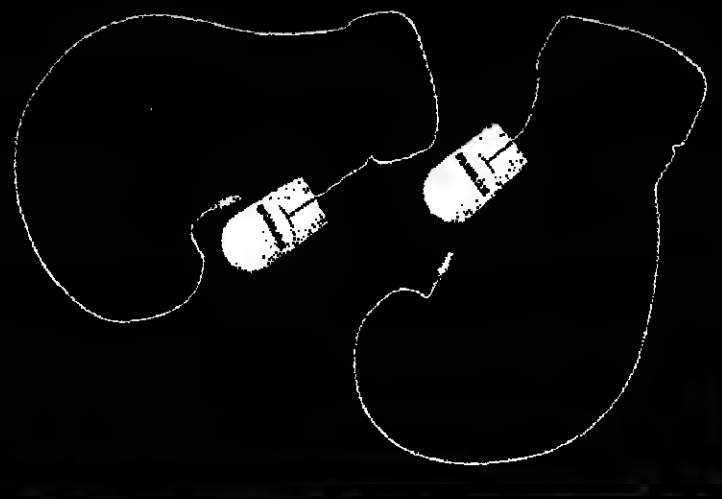


Low V will drift north-east and then become slow moving. Low T will fill, with High A remaining stationary.

## THE WORLD YESTERDAY

	°C	°F		°C	°F
Adelaide	21.70	71.06	Paris	15.59	60.06
Algeria	20.68	69.22	Prague	13.34	56.01
Athens	20.68	69.22	Rangoon	29.84	85.71
Bahia	15.59	60.06	Reykjavik	12.72	54.90
Bangkok	28.71	83.68	Rio de Janeiro	16.61	61.90
Bombay	28.71	83.68	Rome	16.61	61.90
Buenos Aires	15.59	60.06	Sao Paulo	16.61	61.90
Calcutta	28.71	83.68	Seoul	16.61	61.90
Cardiff	15.59	60.06	Singapore	28.71	83.68
Chennai	28.71	83.68	Sydney	16.61	61.90
Copenhagen	15.59	60.06	Taipei	16.61	61.90
Dublin	15.59	60.06	Tokyo	16.61	61.90
Edinburgh	15.59	60.06	Ulaanbaatar	16.61	61.90
Helsinki	15.59	60.06	Washington	16.61	61.90
Hong Kong	28.71	83.68	Wellington	16.61	61.90
Kobe	15.59	60.06	Zurich	16.61	61.90
London	15.59	60.06			
Los Angeles	15.59	60.06			
Manila	28.71	83.68			
Medan	28.71	83.68			
Mumbai	28.71	83.68			
Nairobi	15.59	60.06			
Rangoon	28.71	83.68			
Seoul	16.61	61.90			
Singapore	28.71	83.68			
Sydney	16.61	61.90			
Taipei	16.61	61.90			
Tokyo	16.61	61.90			
Ulaanbaatar	16.61	61.90			
Washington	16.61	61.90			
Wellington	16.61	61.90			
Zurich	16.61	61.90			

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all year round at [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)  
you won't have to fight  
for the bargains this january



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# One hand stuck out of snowy waste led rescuers to a miracle in the mountains

BY KIM SENGUPTA AND  
STEPHEN GOODWIN

THE SIGHT, in the flickering torchlight, of an arm sticking out of the snow was all that helped to prevent what happened at Aonach Mor from turning into a disaster of even greater magnitude.

The rescuers had been facing the seemingly hopeless task of searching miles of snow-covered land in the dark for a lost party of climbers. But now, with frantic digging, they managed to scoop out three people, freezing and in shock after being entombed under 3ft of snow for 16 hours.

Four others, however, were dead. And yesterday, as families of the survivors breathed a sigh of relief and the bereaved mourned, the question of how things could have gone so badly wrong began to be asked.

The climbers were all Kent Venture Scouts, led by Roger Wild, a guide and instructor from Fort William and one of the most experienced mountaineers in the country. The party had gone to Scotland on a winter skills training course.

When the Scouts arrived on Monday at the Lochaber mountains Nevis Range, alongside Ben Nevis, the area was being battered by a force 9 gale. The Scottish Avalanche Information Service had issued a Category 3 warning, signifying there was the "substantial risk" of an avalanche.

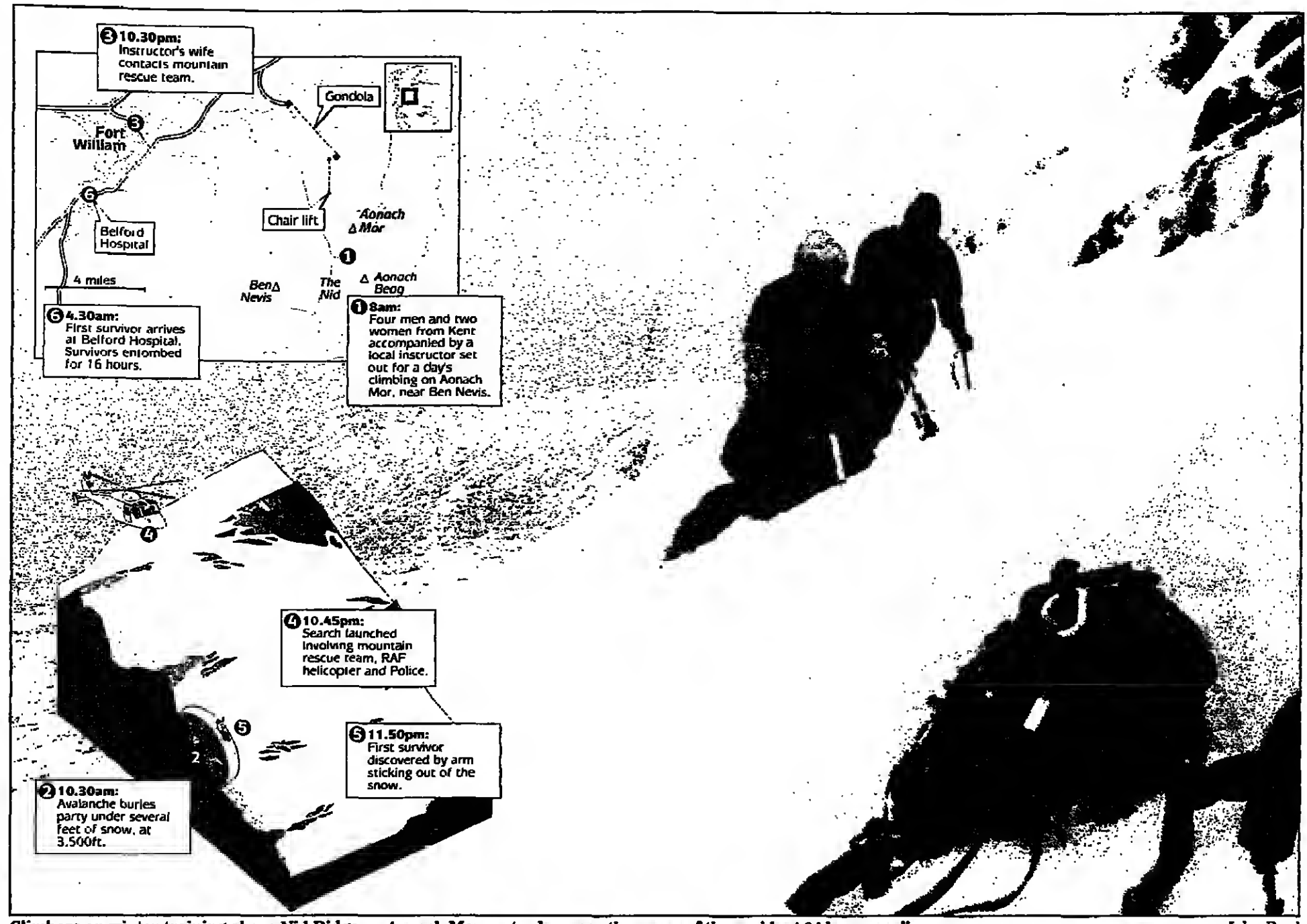
The group was staying on The Fingal, a 128ft barge moored on the Caledonian Canal at Gairloch, north of Fort William, and were said to be in good spirits.

Early on Tuesday morning Mr Wild, who runs his own climbing school and is a member of the Lochaber mountain rescue team, set off with his party for the 4,006ft peak of Aonach Mor.

Lashed by icy winds they climbed 3,500ft towards their destination. At about 10am, they were hit by the avalanche. The experience must have been terrifying, say mountaineers, with the climbers hearing a roar before being engulfed by cascading snow and ice with no hope of escape.

They should all have perished. No one can recall anybody having survived such an avalanche in the Scottish Highlands. The reason some of them did, according to experts, is because they managed to dig airholes in the snow that was covering them.

They may also have used the



Climbers on winter training above Nid Ridge on Aonach Mor yesterday, near the scene of the accident 24 hours earlier

John Paul

## DEADLY PEAKS

THE TRAGEDY at Aonach Mor is the worst avalanche incident recorded in Scotland, but it is not the worst disaster to hit the Scottish mountains. In 1972, six teenagers from Edinburgh died after they were caught in a blizzard on a 4,000ft summit plateau of the Cairngorms. The most dangerous time of the year for climbers and skiers is from mid-December to mid-April, when most avalanches are recorded. The notorious 1994-1995 "season" claimed 12 lives. There have been a total of 48 deaths recorded from avalanches since 1980. More than 200 people have died on the mountains in the past 18 years.

Guides and safety experts have attributed many accidents to inexperienced climbers underestimating the dangers. With its frightening cliffs and swiftly changing weather, Ben Nevis is said to kill more climbers than the Eiger in Switzerland. However, the experts say the Scottish peaks are statistically safer now than a few years ago. "It is accepted that fatalities have been in decline in real terms when the rise in participants is considered," a rescuer said.

LINUS GREGORIADIS

emergency procedures climbers are taught for such situations, adopting a swimming motion to help to propel the body upwards.

One of the group, Sarah Finch, later told rescuers that she saved herself by frantically clearing the snow from her mouth and nose as the avalanche hit. Unable to move for an hour, she breathed through her hand, which she had clamped over her mouth to prevent choking by the snow.

Mr Wild should have returned home by late Tuesday afternoon. When he failed to do so by 9.30pm his wife, Fiona, contacted the police. They in turn called Terry Confield, leader of the Lochaber mountain rescue team and a friend of her husband.

Mr Wild had left details of his route and itinerary and the team were able to use the gondola lift system of the Nevis Range to get 30 of the rescue party to the site in about an hour.

As well as the Lochaber team, RAF mountain rescue teams came from Kinross, near Fife, and Leeming in North Yorkshire. The Yorkshire team had been on snow training in the area when they were alerted. A helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth also joined the operation.

The 60-strong rescue party continued for about an hour. Then one of their torches illuminated an arm and the shape of a body in the snow.

John Stevenson, deputy leader of the rescue party, said: "We then began to dig and found the other people. The avalanche had not swept them apart any great distance."

"We could not believe it when three of the people, two men and a woman, were still alive. Although they were very hypothermic, they were still conscious, and one of them managed to speak with a great deal of effort. It was a relief not all of the people had perished, but it is still a terrible tragedy."

Mr Confield said it was the first time in 35 years of rescue work that he had seen anyone escape alive from an avalanche.

Flight Lieutenant Patrick Thirkell, from RAF Kinross, said: "In the 18 years that I have been involved in rescues, I have never come across a case in which avalanche victims have survived for a such a long period of time. Usually, if people are not crushed or smothered to death by the force of the tumbling avalanche, the cold and wet will ensure they will freeze to death."

"I honestly thought we would only be looking at bodies. I think that this case will change experts' opinions on the survivability of avalanche victims."

The climbers were brought down by the ski-lift gondola after it was decided that the helicopter could not be used because of the fierce wind and fears that the rotor blades would trigger another avalanche.

The survivors were transferred by ambulance to Belford Hospital at Fort William. None of their injuries was serious, but they were suffering from hypothermia.

Consultant surgeon David Sedgwick said: "I would have expected them to have sustained major skull, chest and abdominal injuries. They were in pretty good condition despite being trapped for hours. They are lucky to have survived."

Any investigation into the accident would want to know why Mr Wild chose to go ahead

with the expedition despite the avalanche warning. Blyth Wright, co-ordinator of the Scottish Avalanche Information Service, said: "The team leader would have known the risks and the information would have been readily available. A Category 3 warning means that an avalanche is most likely to occur. The reports are available in most hotels, guesthouses, pubs, police stations and it is unlikely they would not have been aware of the risks."

Local mountaineers said the climbers were in an area that did not normally suffer from avalanches and that Mr Wild was a proficient guide.

Jan Sykes, manager of the Nevis Range Ski Resort, said: "Roger is a very careful, sensible bloke. Sometimes accidents really are accidents. Where they were was not particularly steep, I just walked up with my hands in my pockets and there was really no scale of avalanche at all. It seems to have been one of those bloody awful things."

Yesterday cloud shrouded Aonach Mor, lifting intermittently to reveal the covering of snow that makes the Scottish hills such a magnet for climbers in winter. Looking up at the peaks, one mountaineer said: "The lesson is how unpredictable nature can be. You can put up ski-lifts, you can do all sorts of things, but you cannot really tame these mountains."

## SNOW AND AVALANCHE REPORT LOCHABER

**AVAILANCHE HAZARD 1500 HRS TUE 29/12/98**  
Strong Southerly winds have deposited fresh windslab in sheltered locations with a NW, N and E aspect above 800m. This windslab is weakly bonded especially on steeper slopes. Where this windslab exists in sufficient quantity the avalanche hazard is Considerable (Category 3). All wind scooped snow slopes are generally stable.  
Warning notice posted at Lochaber ski centre yesterday

## 'I keep thinking he'll breeze back home'

THE MOTHER of one of the avalanche victims told yesterday how she learnt of her son's death after seeing a newflash on Teletext.

Daphne Lewis, mother of Matthew Lewis, said: "As soon as I heard what happened, I rang the police in Scotland and told them who I was and that my son was on a trip. He went away from the phone and then

came back and asked if I had anybody with me and told me it was my son. I keep thinking he'll breeze back home again, but I know he won't."

She added: "I don't hold anything against that instructor. These things happen. I think you just have to accept, sometimes, acts of God and nature."

Speaking at a news conference in Dartford, where all the victims and two of the three survivors were members of a Scout Fellowship group, Mr Lewis' father, Bill, said: "We were not there to make a judgement on whether they should have heeded weather warnings. Until we can control the weather, we can't do much about such a thing as this."

Matthew was very keen to get the experience the trip offered and he put a lot of effort into going. I'm concerned they might have been overkeen on the day."

Mrs Lewis spoke also of the two Scout group members who survived, Sarah Finch, 25, and Steven Newton. "Our thoughts are with Steve and Sarah. They must have been through a dreadful trauma, being buried

alive for 16 hours. They've got to live with that the rest of their lives, seeing their friends die. They must be in a terrible state. Who knows, they may never get over that."

John Ray, the father of Emma, said: "All the group were fun-loving and enjoyed life. Their guide, from what we have heard, was very experienced and he was an expert mountain

rescue member. From what we have been told the group were in a safe area. It was just one of those tragic things."

In a statement read on behalf of all the victims' families, the Rev Richard Ardning said "We are all very distressed that these young people were so tragically lost while they were living life to the full and doing what they enjoyed most."

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# 'Delia power' enlisted to aid pupils' reading

A GOVERNMENT-FUNDED body set up to encourage reading has bowed to the might of "Delia power" - the massive influence of TV and film over consumers of everything from eggs to education.

The National Year of Reading is setting aside money to give children free showings of films in the hope that having seen the film they will then read the book.

The quango is giving £5,000 to the charity Film Education to screen films to thousands of schoolchildren across the UK during January and February. The move is an implicit acceptance that many children will read a book only if they have seen its screen adaptation.

Films to be screened include *Shakespeare in Love*, a new film with a script by Tom Stoppard, and an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Belfast-based *Titanic Town*, based on the book by Mary Costello and starring Julie Walters, will also be shown.

A fourth free film will not be based on a book at all - the new Hollywood movie *Pleasant*.

BY DAVID LISTER  
Arts News Editor

*antville*, starring Joan Allen, is being screened for schoolchildren because it includes scenes set around libraries and reading.

Anita Russell, of Film Education, defended the project yesterday. "Adaptations play a key part in education."

"Research shows that children who are taught literacy using the moving image as well as written text perform at one-and-a-half National Curriculum levels higher than those who rely on teacher input and the written text only."

A statement from the National Year of Reading said: "The muscle of the moving image affects us all. 'Delia power' - the new phrase which sums up the power of TV and film over consumers - not only has the power to spark a run on eggs but can increase sales of books by over 300 per cent."

For example, following 1996's Oscar-winning hit film *The English Patient*, annual

sales of Herodotus jumped from 12,000 to 50,000 copies.

The residents of Lyme Regis were besieged by the world's tourists when *The French Lieutenant's Woman* hit cinemas in 1982. "A large majority of the highest grossing films of all time in the UK are adaptations from books. These include *Jurassic Park*, *Independence Day*, *Mrs Doubtfire* and *Boyz*."

Liz Attenborough, project director for the National Year of Reading, added: "The relationship between books and their subsequent TV or film adaptations show a healthy cross-fertilisation between viewers and readers."

"Many successful adaptations encourage new readers to turn to the original novel, and encourage reading of other books by the same author." Books currently being adapted into films include *The Beach* by Alex Garland, *Dead Babies* by Martin Amis, *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall, *The Spire* by William Golding and *The Golden Bowl* by Henry James.



The charity Film Education is to give thousands of screenings of popular classics to encourage reading skills

Peter Byrne/Guzelian

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## CJD fears put watchdog under strain

AN INCREASE in the number of people suspected of suffering from Creutzfeldt Jakob disease is straining the national surveillance system for the human version of "mad cow" disease.

BY STEVE CONNOR  
Science Editor

Bob Will, head of the National CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh, has consulted the Department of Health about the need to increase the unit's resources to cope with the extra workload.

Dr Will, a clinical neurologist, said the past few months had seen a higher number of people being referred to the unit by doctors concerned that their patients were suffering from CJD, some of whom may be suffering from the human form of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

The unit, which was set up in 1990, was designed to cope with a maximum of 150 referrals a year. However, if present trends continue, the unit will have to deal with up to 300 referrals in 1999.

"If it gets higher than 150 referrals we will need extra staff and if it gets higher again we'd have to consider the way the whole system works," Dr Will said. He has resigned from the government's Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee, on which he has served since 1990, to concentrate on the surveillance programme.

There have been 34 deaths

from new variant CJD - human BSE - and scientists have not seen a significant increase in cases to indicate an epidemic. However, the first indication of an epidemic would be an increase in referrals to the unit.

"It's significant in terms of the workload. In terms of meaning something in relation to CJD I think that is impossible to say," Dr Will said.

"We have been quite busy in the past few months but I don't think you can conclude that means something definite epidemiologically at the moment."

For every five patients with suspected new variant CJD, only one proves definitely to have it - cases are usually confirmed by post-mortem tests on the patient's brain.

"We've had a few more referrals than our previous experience in the past few months," Dr Will said. He added that the unit looks particularly carefully at suspected cases of CJD in the under-50s, who are at greater risk of the new variant of the disease.

Scientists believe it is too early to say whether there will be an epidemic of "human BSE" because of the uncertainty over both the time it takes for the disease to incubate and the amount of infected material that entered the human food chain.

## IN BRIEF

### Man held over mummified body

A MAN aged 61 was arrested by Suffolk police yesterday after the discovery in a field near Woodbridge of the body of Steven Burt, 25, who had been missing for several years. A post-mortem examination found that the body had "mummified" after being left in a dry draughty place. Police carried out a search yesterday of a house in Woodbridge.

### Teachers 'spend £5m on books'

TEACHERS HAVE personally spent £5m to aid the Government's literacy hour drive to raise reading standards, it was claimed. A survey by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers found that more than half of staff in primary schools had each spent an average £25.80. Ministers insist the £113m programme is fully funded.

### Showjumper killed by falling tree

AN INTERNATIONAL showjumper was killed by a falling tree as he drove to a beauty spot to propose to his girlfriend, Michael Joyce, 26, and Samantha Smith, 20, were caught in a violent storm en route to a waterfall near Connemara in Co Galway, Ireland, on Boxing Day. Miss Smith was uninjured.

### Ferry users' details go on record

NEW RULES on ferry passenger information - first called for after the 1987 Zeebrugge disaster - finally come into force tomorrow. From 1 January, details of the name, age and sex of all passengers on board ships will have to be recorded for search and rescue purposes.

### Bumper millennium lottery draw

CAMELOT, the National Lottery operator, said yesterday it is to hold a £250m millennium draw on 31 December next year, which will create the opportunity for a number of winners to become millionaires.



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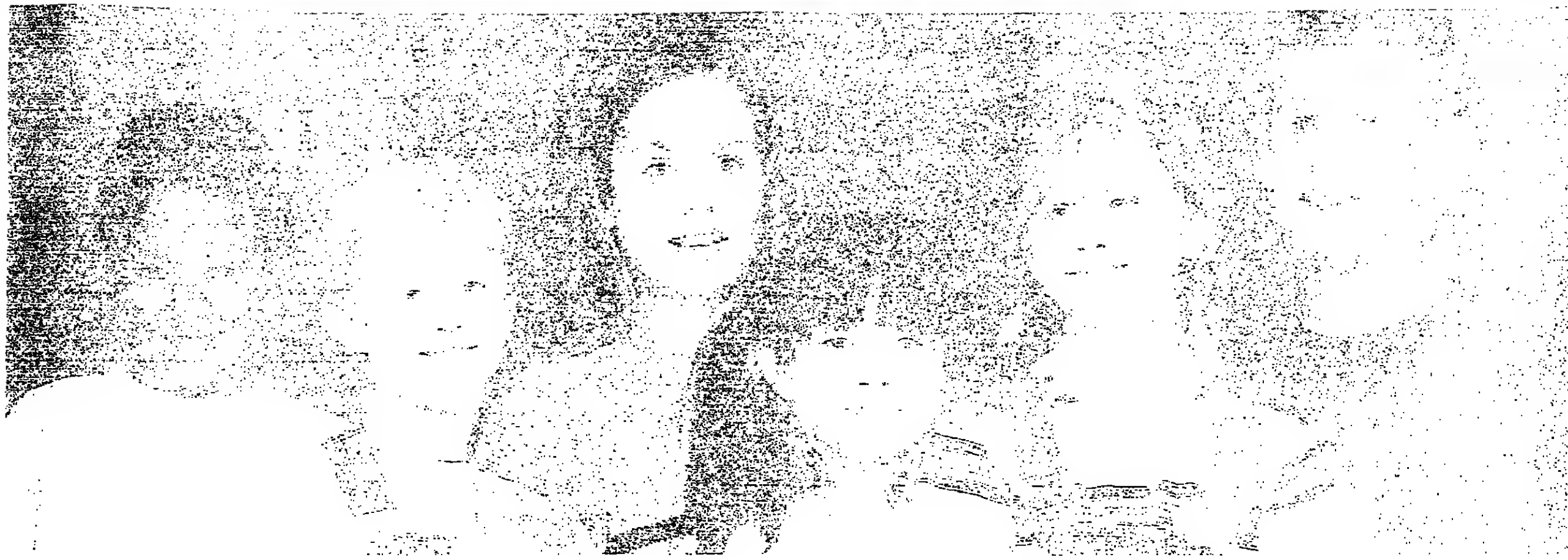


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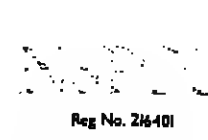
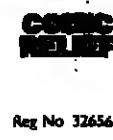
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The 13-strong female jazz saxophone ensemble, the Mass Producers, rehearsing in the grounds of the Royal Naval College in Greenwich, where they are performing tonight at the Greenwich and Docklands First Night '99 festival  
Magali Delporte

# Vote at 16 to be considered by ministers

RADICAL PROPOSALS to lower the voting age from 18 to 16 are to be considered by the Government in a fresh attempt to keep politicians in touch with the youth of the day.

Under plans to be put before ministers next year, a Representation of Young People Bill would allow the UK's 1.5 million 16 and 17-year-olds to vote in general and local elections.

Advocates of the change said yesterday it was simply "absurd" that the law allowed youngsters to pay tax, have sex, get married and fight for their country but denied them the franchise.

The cross-party move follows a new study that shows

By PAUL WAUGH  
Political Correspondent

teenagers are much more interested in politics than commonly assumed, even though many are disillusioned with the main parties.

Labour backers of the idea believe it could restore much-needed idealism to the Government's battered image and confirm Tony Blair's reputation as a ground-breaking premier.

The last lowering of the voting age, from 21 to 18, was enacted by Harold Wilson's Labour government in 1969.

A Home Office working party on electoral law will be presented with the proposals next summer once it has concluded its current consultation on electronic voting and polling stations in supermarkets.

Labour won the last general election with the help of a large lead among young voters and party officials believe the age change could help it to hold on to scores of key marginal seats.

Pressure to extend the franchise age follows research by Loughborough and Nottingham Trent Universities into the attitudes of under-19s.

The study, backed by the Labour-supporting Fabian Society, found that more than 81 per cent discussed politics with family or friends and three-quarters thought it was important to vote in national elections.

The survey, which polled 5,000 teenagers to make it the biggest of its kind conducted, found that just 5 per cent thought voting was a "waste of time". Tackling poverty was their top political priority, followed by help for the Third

World and care for the environment.

Dominic Wring, one of the study's authors, said the research had uncovered evidence that teenagers exhibited an "engaged cynicism" about politics. They were disillusioned, but wanted a greater say.

"Tony Blair, like no prime minister since Harold Wilson, has talked of a 'young country' whilst cultivating and listening to celebrities popular with youth," he said.

"Fundamentally something more imaginative and concrete is required to sustain and nurture democratic participation among the young. A progressive administration would adopt this."

Although Labour stands most to gain from an expanded youth vote, the Tories and the Liberal Democrats believe under-18s could reap them electoral dividends.

Policies such as the lower minimum wage rate and benefit restrictions for the under 18s, as well as rising unemployment, could lead to a backlash against Labour, they say.

Lembit Opik, MP for Montgomeryshire and the Liberal Democrats' Youth Affairs spokesman, said his party was the only one formally committed to lowering the voting age.

"The simple fact is that people under 18 feel that they are prejudiced against in grounds of age. They pay tax, can have sex and die for their country, but they can't vote. It's a classic case of taxation without representation."

"The onus is on those who want to keep the voting age at 18 to prove why they are right, not on those who want change."

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Age 17:  
Can be interviewed by the police without "an appropriate adult" being present; Join the armed forces with parental consent (girls); Hold a licence to drive most vehicles.

Age 18:  
Allowed to vote; serve on a jury; buy and drink alcohol in a bar; consent to a "homosexual act" with another man in private; get married without parental consent; own land and apply for a mortgage; enter a betting shop and place a bet; get a tattoo; give your body to science; buy fireworks.

Age 21:  
Become an MP; hold a licence to drive a large passenger vehicle or heavy goods vehicle; apply for a licence to sell alcohol; adopt a child.

## Trees threatened by Asian beetle

THE GOVERNMENT is taking action to prevent the spread of the Asian longhorn beetle which poses a lethal threat to hardwood trees, such as sycamore, horse chestnut, willow and poplar.

The threat emerged after the beetle was found in wooden packing cases containing Chinese imports. Sightings have been reported in various parts of England and Wales but the Forestry Commission believes that the beetles have yet to spread to trees.

To prevent this happening, import controls have been imposed on wooden packing material entering Britain from China. The insect will be included on a list of prohibited pests - and wood packaging, which carries the bulk of Chinese exports to Britain, will have to be both bark and grub-hole free. China will be given until 15 February to comply with the new rules.

Roddie Burgess, head of Forestry Commission's plant health service, said: "We know that the beetle would survive in most of the country, and that it would cause economic damage, not just to our forests

By STEPHEN VINES  
in Hong Kong



Asian longhorn beetle: Infestation kills trees fast

and woodlands but also, possibly to fruit-growers."

The problem with the Asian longhorn beetle - *Anoplophora glabripennis* - is that once it becomes embedded in trees it kills them very fast. There is no known antidote and the spread of the beetle can only be achieved by felling trees.

The beetle is about an inch long (2.5cm) and has a shiny black covering. Its most distinctive feature is its long horn-shaped feelers, which are black with white rings.

The United States has already imposed a rigorous exclusion regime.



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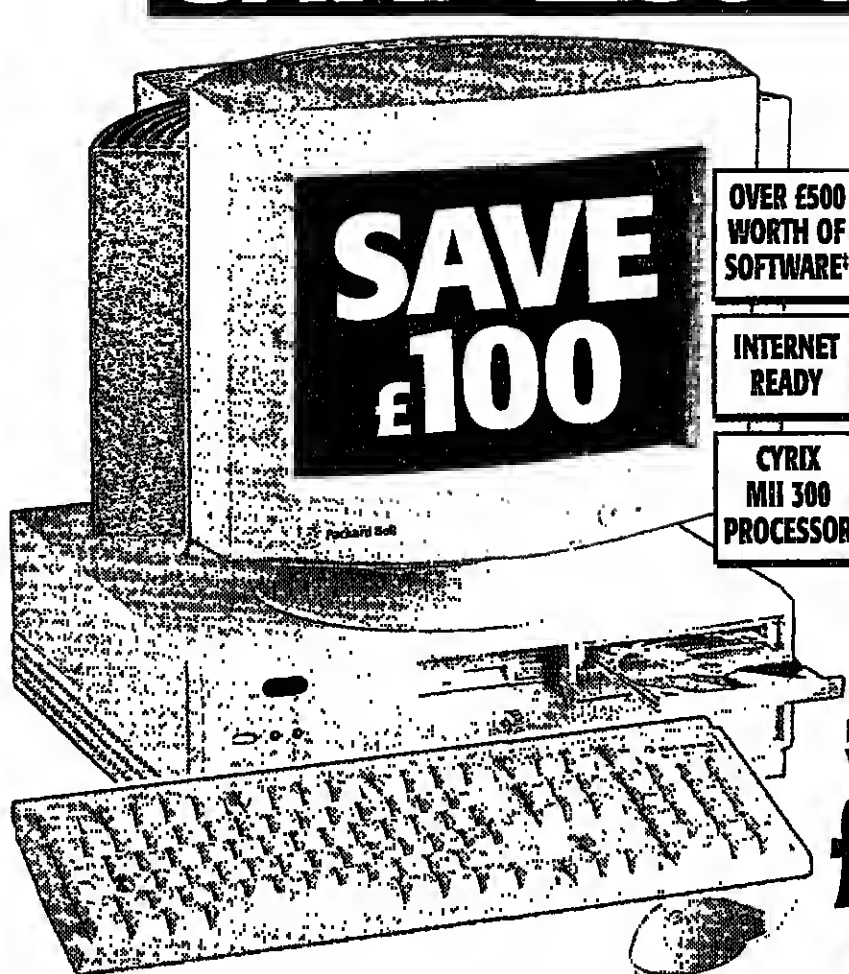
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# Old singing stars set a Sixties note

## THE ARTS

THE SIXTIES reverberated through the honours list as the singers Dusty Springfield and Tom Jones were joined by the artist Bridget Riley.

Dusty Springfield's OBE will prove highly popular. The 59-year-old singer, best remembered for her husky voice, kitsch blonde image and heavy black eye make-up, is seriously ill with breast cancer. She issued a statement saying: "I'm deeply and genuinely honoured. This is the biggest surprise of my life."

By contrast, a very contemporary performer to be honoured is the young actor Robert Carlyle. One of the stars of *The Full Monty* and *Trainspotting*, he is appointed OBE, but the biggest award to the acting profession is a knighthood for

BY DAVID LISTER  
Arts News Editor

Nigel Hawthorne, best known as the supremely suave and cunning civil servant in *Yes Minister* and *Yes, Prime Minister*, and on stage and screen, as George III in *The Madness of King George*.

Andrew Davis, who has become a familiar figure on television, conducting the *Last Night of the Proms*, also receives a knighthood.

The world of the visual arts sees two of its best-known ambassadors honoured. There is a knighthood for Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate Gallery, and chairman of the Turner Prize judges, while the veteran artist Bridget Riley becomes a Companion of Hon-

our. Since the Sixties, she has dazzled the world with her flickering and shimmering images. Riley has been described as "an abstract painter in the grand tradition".

Duncan Kenworthy, who produced the box office sell-out *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, is appointed OBE, as are two veteran pop heart-throbs, Tom Jones and David Essex. Roger Moore, 71, who has starred as the Saint and James Bond, is appointed CBE - not for services to acting, but in the diplomatic list for his work on behalf of UNICEF.

The comedian Lenny Henry, described by his wife, the actress Dawn French, as "kind and revolting", is appointed CBE for services to comedy, drama and *Comic Relief*.



Gen John de Chastelain (left) and John Major become Companions of Honour for Northern Ireland peace work



The singer Dusty Springfield (left) is appointed OBE and the actor Nigel Hawthorne is knighted

# Peacemakers get their just rewards

## NORTHERN IRELAND

KEY PLAYERS in the Northern Ireland peace process received a string of awards in recognition of their role in securing the Good Friday Agreement.

As with the Nobel Peace Prize, presented to Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble and SDLP leader John Hume, the New Year honours list is seen as a means of rewarding the participants while maintaining the momentum of the process. As well as recognising big players such as John Major, General John de Chastelain, and Senator George Mitchell, the list honours many of the little-known figures who have also played their part.

Quentin Thomas, who is knighted as political director of the Northern Ireland Office and the government's chief

BY PAUL WAUGH AND  
DAVID MCKITTRICK

contact with the IRA and Sinn Féin during the Nineties, Mr Thomas met senior republicans in conditions of strict secrecy prior to the IRA's 1994 ceasefire. He later continued this role in a more public fashion, frequently meeting Sinn Féin figures such as Martin McGuinness.

John Holmes, who was until recently the Prime Minister's Principal Private Secretary, and was almost Mr Blair's shadow in the crucial last days of the Easter talks, is appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Reginald Empey, a former Unionist Lord Mayor of Belfast, who was appointed OBE in 1993,

became a knight. In addition, Adam Ingram and Paul Murphy, both Ministers of State at the Northern Ireland Office, become Privy Counsellors.

It is understood that senior SDLP figures were offered honours but rejected them as part of the party's policy of non-acceptance. SDLP councillors who have been appointed MBE in recent years have been forced to leave the party.

The list also recognises those who coped with the Omagh bomb. John McKimney, the chief executive of Omagh council, and Clive Russell, the leader of the medical emergency team, are appointed OBE. Philip Marshall, a police sergeant who directed operations at the scene, is appointed MBE.

# The Prime Minister's List

## LIFE PEERS

Inbirt, Sir Peter Michael, OPM, JPM, Lord-Lt of Greater London, comm; Met Pol, 1987-93. J'Neill, Miss Oona Sylvia, CBE, Principal, Newnham College, Camb. Patei, Sir Naren, Consultant, Bristow, Nirewells Hospital Dundee; Jly pres, R College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and past chm, Academy of Medical R Colleges. Trotman, Sir Alexander, Lately chm and Ch exec Off, Ford Motor Company. Williamson, Sir David Francis, CMG, CB, Formerly sec-Gen of the European Comm.

## COMPANIONS OF HONOUR

Major, The Right Honourable John, MP, Member of Parliament for Huntingdon, Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treas, 99-97. For services to peace in Northern Ireland. Riley, Miss Bridget Louise, CBE, artist. For services to Art.

## PRIVY COUNSELLORS

Ingram, Adam Paterson, JPM, Member of Parliament for Aberdeenshire, Northern Ireland Office. Campbell, Walter Menzies, CBE, QC, MP, Member of Parliament for Fife North East. Murphy, Paul Peter, MP, Member of Parliament for Torfaen, Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office.

## KNIGHTS BACHELOR

Hank, Maurice Victor, Dep chm, treat Universal Stores and chm, Airer Group.

Huishon, John Alexander Raymond, Chief exec, Defence Equipment and Research Agency, AOD.

Javis, David John, Lately chm, advisory Committee on Business and the Environment. For leading Business in abating Air Pollution.

Javis, Andrew Frank, CBE, conductor. For serv Music.

Jummett, Prof Michael Anthony, Jardy, Emeritus Prof of Logic, Oxford University. For serv Philosophy and to Racial Justice.

Kemper, Reginald Norman Morton, OBE, Member, Belfast City Council. For serv to the Police.

Kemp, John, CBE, Vice pres, Nissan Europe and Ch exec, Nissan Motor Manufacturing Ltd.

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Shand, James, MBE, Accoridnator and Scottish County Band Leader. For serv Scottish Culture.

Smith, Prof Eric Brian, For serv Academic/Business Partnership and to Higher Educ.

Smith, Graham William, CBE, Her Majesty's ch Insp of Probation. For serv the Probation Service.

Sousley, Peter Alfred, Leader, Leicester City Cld. For serv Leicester and to Local Gov.

Thomas, Quentin Jeremy, CB, For serv Peace in Northern Ireland.

Walker, John Ernest, FRS, For serv Molecular Biology.

Kemp-Welch, John, chm, London Stock Exchange. For serv Financial Regulation and to Financial Services.

Williams, Francis Owen Garbott, CBE, chm and ngr, Williams Grand Prix Engineering Ltd. For serv the Motor Sport ind.

Williams, John Kyffin, OBE, DL, For serv the Visual Arts in Wales.

Winkley, David Ross, Dir, National Primary Trust. For serv Primary Educ.

Woo, Po-Shing, For charitable serv the Arts.

## ORDER OF THE BATH

Knight Grand Cross (GCB) Wicks, Sir Nigel Leonard, KCB, CVO, CBE, Second perm sec, H.M. Treas.

Knight Commander (KCB) Mountfield, Robin, CB, Permanent sec, Cabinet Office. Scholar, Michael Charles, CB, Permanent sec, Dept of Trade and Indust.

Companion (CB) Blythe, Mark Andrew, Legal Adviser, H.M. Treas. Duff, Graham, Lately dir, Casework Services, Crown Prosecution Service. Fisk, David John, Chief Scientist and dir, Environment International. Dept of Env, Transport and the Regions. Gordon, Mrs Vera Kathleen, Head, Agricultural Crops and Commodities Directorate, Min of Agric, Fisheries and Food. Grover, Derek James, Langlands, Dir, Skills and Lifelong Learning, Dept for Educ and Employment. Harrison, Jeremy John Moore, For serv.

Hartnack, Paul Richard Samuel, Comptroller Gen, Patent Office. Dept of Trade and Indust. Hastings, Alfred James, Clerk of the Journals, House of Commons.

McKenzie, Michael, QC, Master of the Crown Office and Queen's Corner and Attorney, Registrar of Criminal Appeals and of the Courts-Martial Appeal Court. Lord Chancellor's Dept. Sawyer, Anthony Charles, Dir, Operations Prevention, H.M. Board of Customs and Excise. Scafe, Geoffrey Richard, Chief exec, NIS in Scotland.

## ORDER OF ST MICHAEL & ST GEORGE

Commander (CMG) Beery, Prof Margaret, chm, Crown Agents for Overseas Govts and Administrations Ltd. For serv Humanitarian Aid. Seabrook, Miss Susan Margaret, Lately dir, Balkans Secretariat, MOD. Wall, James Francis, Head of Shipping Policy 3 Division, Dept of Env, Transport and the Regions.

## ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Dame Commander (DBE) Fledding, Miss Pauline, Dir of Nursing, Preston Acute Hospitals Trust and Chorley and South Ribblesdale NHS Trust. For serv Nursing. Seward, Mrs Margaret Helen Elizabeth, CBE, Presid, Gen Dental Cld. For serv the Dental Profession. Shovelton, Mrs Helena, For serv the Citizens Advice Bureau Movement and for serv.

Knight Commander (KBE) Holmes, John Eaton, CMG, CVO, Principal private sec to the Prime Minr. For serv peace in Northern Ireland.

## Commander (CBE)

Andrew, John, CBE, MOD, Andrews, Miss Carol, Descriptive Sergeant, Met Pol, Baginbun, Peter Hill, DL, For serv the county in Cld. Barker, Mrs Maureen Margaret, North East Lancashire Cld.

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## COUNTDOWN TO THE EURO

## Prices set for a drop – eventually

THE ACID test of the success of the euro will be whether its launch creates a genuine single European market. For only if there is a real increase in competition, boosting business and cutting prices for consumers, will the single currency generate all of its promised economic benefits.

The 300 million citizens of the first 11 countries to join will want to be able to judge quite quickly whether the euro is having an impact where it matters – on their wallets. Some experts are predicting widespread outbreaks of price wars.

There is certainly plenty of scope for competition sending prices downwards. An internal Treasury report last March, which formed the basis of further investigations by the European Commission, found huge disparities in prices between countries.

Some of these variations have already achieved notoriety thanks to consumer pressure. Cars, for one. A report by the commission last year found that a Fiat Punto cost 21.4 per cent less in France than in the UK. A Renault Megane was 22 per cent cheaper in Germany, while a larger car such as the VW Passat was 14 per cent cheaper in France.

In some items, however, UK shoppers do better than their continental counterparts. For example, CDs sell for about 15 per cent less here than in France. But, of course, they are cheaper still in the bigger and more competitive American market. Only about a quarter of British prices are lower than prices for equivalent goods and services in the United States.

Only for a handful of items, such as clothing and footwear, are British prices among the EU's lowest. For others, including housing and transport, they are about the highest.

Bank charges are substan-

BY DIANE COYLE  
Economics Editor

tially lower in the UK than over the Channel, at £18 a year for an account in credit compared with £35 in Germany and £88 in France. This advantage reflects precisely the fact that British high street banking is far more competitive – and demonstrates the scale of gains that could lie ahead for consumers.

The theory is that the switch to a single currency will boost spending power in two ways. First, with everything priced in euros, it will be easier to compare prices because the tags will no longer have different currencies on them. People will become more willing to cross borders to shop, especially for expensive items. And that goes for Britons too, even though the UK is staying out of the first wave of membership.

Differences in VAT rates and sales duties complicate the comparison. But there can be little doubt that consumer pressure will force manufacturers to adjust their prices and, probably, will force governments to bring taxes more closely into line. The willingness of British consumers to spend a day on the cross-Channel ferries simply to buy cheaper alcohol and tobacco is a vivid demonstration of the potential consumer power.

Francesca Arcidiaco, of the Consumers' Association, says: "We do expect the increased transparency and increased competition to drive prices down." She adds, however, that it will not happen right away, and that the impact on the UK will be indirect.

The second result of the launch of the euro will be to make it easier for businesses to take advantage of economies of scale. Experts at the National Institute for Economic and Social Research in London found



A Frankfurt trader yesterday surveying a sign announcing 'The euro comes' on the last stock market session of the year

that much of the difference in productivity levels between US factories and European ones was the fact that the former had much bigger production runs thanks to their larger market. As long as euroland does become a genuine single market, that boost to productivity from scale should translate into a better deal for customers, as well as higher profits.

How quickly this might all happen is another matter. It is not until 2002 that the new notes and coins will be introduced, so prices will continue to be displayed in national currencies as well as euros.

Many businesses are waiting to see what others do before changing their own prices. Retailers are under no compulsion to accept euros before

1 January 2002, although those signing up will be entitled to display the official "We accept euros" stickers.

Meanwhile, they put a higher priority on dealing with questions such as how to convert a DM1.99 price, which will be the equivalent of euros1.02, without being accused of profiteering from the changeover. The European Commission has

suggested retailers might try to get a competitive edge by launching "rounding down" campaigns. The Commission has set up observatories in each country to monitor price changes after the launch of the single currency.

To start with there is likely to be too little familiarity with the new currency for the fresh wind of competition to blow all

the cobwebs off the European economy. The UK will not feel the full force until it joins, anyway. Other obstacles to lower prices will persist, especially for products such as fine perfumes or cars, where the distribution system is tightly controlled by the makers, so that competition is pretty weak anyway.

In addition, cultural influences will continue to divide the

EU market, with widely differing preferences for everything – from whether a washing machine should be top or front-loading, to how much spice should be in sausages.

The Germans spend a higher proportion of their incomes on hygiene products, the Belgians splash out on accessories and Britons are the keenest buyers of books, newspapers and stationery. There is no such thing – yet – as the harmonised euro consumer.

Thus while some manufacturers, such as Procter & Gamble and Allied Domecq, are opting for European-wide brands and prices others, including Unilever, and also retailers such as Marks & Spencer, have indicated they will continue to set prices according to the local conditions.

But there is no question that pressure will build to tear down artificial barriers to pan-European sales.

Take exclusive distribution networks for products such as expensive perfumes or pharmaceuticals, or regulations on the origins of food products. These will be in the front line of competition. Pressure from producers for protection from pan-European competitors explains those classic euro-scare stories about whether, say, cheese is only "feta" if it is made in Greece, whereas cheddar can be made anywhere. An EU directive in your favour is one of the best ways of protecting your market.

In the end, though, the grand single currency project will have failed if the average, everyday European shopper does not have a wider choice at lower prices in the coming years. Its economic success and its political support will depend, ultimately, on what the euro in your pocket will buy.

Letters.  
Review, page 2

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# Republicans start fight for White House

AS AMERICA looks forward to the 2000 presidential elections, the first Republican candidate has broken cover. John McCain, a Senator from Arizona, is the first to take formal steps towards a candidacy and others will follow in the next few days.

Senator McCain filed papers yesterday with the Federal Election Commission to establish the John McCain for President Exploratory Committee.

The 62-year-old senator is known in America as a moderate within the increasingly conservative party, and for that reason may have problems finding a secure base in the party's grass roots.

He is a veteran of the Vietnam War, and spent five years as a prisoner-of-war.

Though he is a conservative, Mr McCain is seen as fiercely independent, and is well-liked beyond the party. He was behind this year's attempt to pass a Bill regulating the tobacco industry and an effort to clean up campaign finance, both of which were shot down, largely by his own side.

Mr McCain will have plenty of strong support from colleagues in Washington, as he is considered to be a political heavyweight and one of the most honest men in politics. "Many, many Republicans and Americans yearn for a new kind of leadership," said Warren Rudman, the committee chairman and himself a former

BY ANDREW MARSHALL  
in Washington

senator. "John McCain is unique in his ability to offer co-operative, independent, experienced leadership." But his independence antagonises other colleagues, who consider him a loose cannon.

Next week another hut very



McCain: First Republican candidate for President

different Republican Senator is also likely to make his move. John Ashcroft of Missouri is a religious conservative with close links to two of the most influential figures in the new Religious Right, Gary Bauer and James Dobson.

The Republican Party has become dominated by hard-line southern conservatives, but this year's Congressional elections and the furor over the scandal surrounding President Bill Clinton have left it battered and bleeding. The

primaries to select candidates do not start until 2000, but candidates will want to move smartly to establish their ground and secure funding.

One reason why Republicans are moving early is that Steve Forbes, the billionaire magazine publisher who spent \$30m on an aborted campaign in 1996, is likely to declare soon and he has boundless funding.

The former vice-president Dan Quayle, former governor of Tennessee Lamar Alexander and former senator Jack Kemp are all waiting in the wings. The Governor of Texas, George W. Bush, son of the former president George Bush, has said he will not decide whether to run until the spring.

The race for the candidacy will be hard-fought, with Mr Bush the present front-runner in terms of popular support and name recognition, but plenty of others have more hacking among the party's most important supporters.

Money will be the key. A candidate, to be serious, needs about \$20m. This will be little problem for Mr Forbes, and Mr Bush also stands a good chance of building fighting funds quickly but others may struggle. It could be that candidates spend so much money and fight so hard in the primaries that, by the time they reach the Presidential election in November 2000, they will have exhausted themselves.



Nkem Chukwu (centre) with her husband, Iyke Louis Udobi, and her mother, Janet Chukwu, in Houston yesterday

AP

## Octuplets are a blessing, says mother

THE MOTHER of the world's first successfully delivered octuplets was released from hospital in Texas yesterday, saying she felt great, despite the stresses of a highly traumatic pregnancy and the anxious struggle for survival that has claimed the life of her smallest offspring.

"It wasn't easy," Nkem Chukwu said at St Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Houston in her first public appearance, "but I

BY ANDREW GUMBEL  
in Los Angeles

did it for the love I have for them."

Ms Chukwu has spent the past three months in hospital. She refused doctors' offers to abort one, or two, of the foetuses to improve the chances of the others. "I've never seen such a word in my Bible," she said. "I wasn't even going to give it a thought, a second

thought." At a press conference, sitting in a wheelchair, she told reporters to stand up and give thanks to God for her successful delivery. "I am blessed. I thank the whole world for their support and prayers," she said.

For six weeks she was confined to bed, and for three weeks she lay with her head tipped to the floor at a sharp angle. The first of her children - two boys and six girls - was born normally on 8 December,

and the others by Caesarean section on 20 December.

The smallest, a girl named Odera who weighed just 10.3oz, died last Sunday. The heaviest child weighed 26oz at birth.

The children are still in a "critical" condition at the specialist neonatology unit at Texas Children's Hospital, also in Houston. Three are on ventilators, but the others are breathing on their own. An ultrasound revealed that they had no bleed-

ing or cysts in their brains. It was described as "dramatic good news" since that would be a sign of future neurological problems. Doctors put their survival at about 92 per cent and they are likely to stay in hospital until their normal due date, around 1 April.

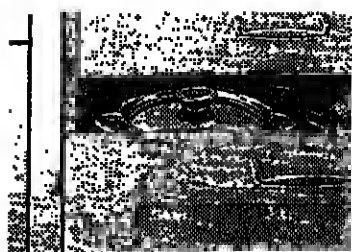
Donations have been flooding in to help the family. At the family's request no photographs or videotapes of the babies have been released.

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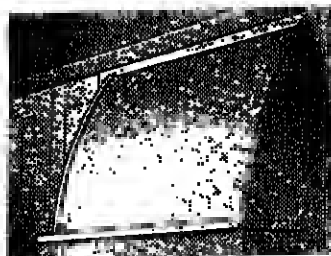
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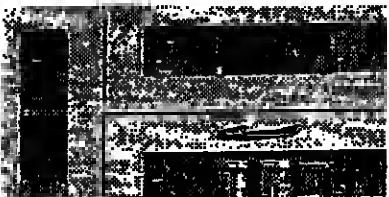
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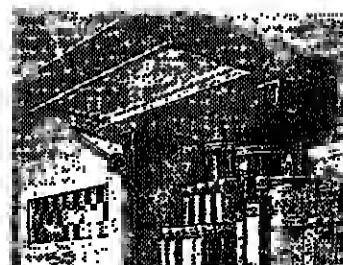
to iron out any potential problems. Then,

and only then, we arrange

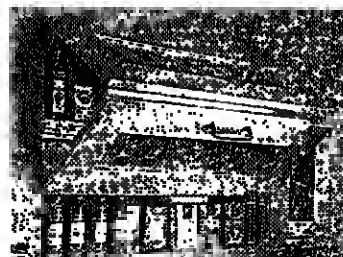
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**RAFAEL ETAN**

**Rough-hewn former chief of staff: his party is really a personal vehicle for his own right-wing nationalist and secularist agenda**  
**Age: 69**  
**Party: Ismeret**  
**Chances: Nil**

options, either to run again for Mr Netanyahu or to join the Shahak-Meridor centre party. They are the Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who wants to accelerate the peace process, and the Communi-

the only woman in the cabinet who wants to slow it down. An unexpected content hovering on the horizon is recently appointed Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon, at 70

other old soldier, who said emphatically on Monday that "if circumstances were right" would not rule himself out. Sharon is keeping his powder dry in case Mr Netanyahu's campaign falls apart.

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The idea was hatched five years ago by Bob Martin, a television science reporter from New Mexico. He will make the attempt with Mr Wallingford and Dave Liniger, chairman of Remax International, the world's biggest estate agent.

Although tiny, the new opposition party has alarmed the Peking authorities because it appears to have a nationwide base.

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

هكذا عن الرجل





Children of inmates at a Russian women's prison are given toys by the Minister of Justice, Pavel Krashennnikov, during a new year party yesterday. The children are staying with their mothers at the prison, near Mozhaik, 60 miles west of Moscow

## Home movie moves Russia

RUSSIAN TELEVISION, like its British counterpart, shows many repeats of comedies that were hardly funny in the first place. Moscow's video kiosks, meanwhile, offer little more than pirate copies of American kick-boxing and gangster movies.

But Russians are raving about one new film and they are proud of the fact that, despite the decline of their cinema industry, it was made in Moscow.

*Land of the Deaf* appeared on the big screen earlier this year and won several awards in Russia. It was directed by Valery Todorovsky, a young man whose humanity and faith prove not everyone is bad or mad and not all is lost in this country that produces so much depressing news.

The film tells the story of

BY HELEN WOMACK  
in Moscow

Rita, who manages to run away when Russian gangsters capture her boyfriend, Alyosha, and torture him for non-payment of a debt. Rita is befriended by a deaf girl called Yaya, who has also suffered at the hands of brutal men. In her strange sign language and broken speech, Yaya tells Rita that somewhere, far away, there is a beautiful "land of the deaf" where they can find peace and happiness.

Rita is drawn back to her boyfriend, who belongs to the world of violence. By experimenting as a prostitute, then by working as a "translator" for a deaf gangster, she manages to raise enough money to pay off Alyosha's debt

but her good-for-nothing boyfriend loses it all gambling.

The film ends with a shoot-out between the deaf gangster's gang and the bandits holding Alyosha. Rita either loses her hearing or chooses to seem deaf, and finally accepts Yaya's invitation of asylum in the land of the deaf.

Escaping in this way appears to mean rejecting the horror and violence of modern Russia, where mafia crime has made life cheap. "The land of the deaf could also be the inner self, the life of the spirit," said Todorovsky in an interview. "But if you choose to take it that way, I won't argue with you."

*Land of the Deaf* was made on a relatively small budget. Much of the action takes place on a boat that is normally a

floating restaurant on the Moscow River. Todorovsky's small private company, Rasconfilm, rents office space at Mosfilm, the rambling, old state complex that in better times used to be Russia's answer to Hollywood.

After making *Land of the Deaf*, his third big movie, Todorovsky, 36, son of the director Pyotr Todorovsky, was feeling optimistic about the chances for a revival of Russian cinema. Then the economic crisis struck.

"Cinema needs stability. It takes at least a year to make a film and you need audiences with money in their pockets to enjoy it. Now, it seems we are back at square one. Yet, I remain an optimist. I love my profession. I cannot live with the feeling that everything is over," he said.

For the time being, he is surviving by making films for television, based on the detective novels of Alexandra Marina, a policewoman turned popular thriller writer.

He rejects the idea of emigrating, as he says a filmmaker needs to work in his own language. Yet he loves foreign cinema, especially British films.

Todorovsky first made his name with a 1991 movie called *Love* about a romance between a Russian boy and a Jewish girl. With anti-Semitism on the rise in Russia and a growing neo-fascist movement, this could not be more relevant. For Todorovsky, differences of race and creed are unimportant and there are only two nationalities: those who hate and those who love.

## A city becoming less Orthodox every day

FRONTLINE  
ISTANBUL

IT IS Ramadan in Istanbul and the Islamic call to prayer echoes over the city. But on Sunday mornings, mingled with the Arabic chanting, the sound of church bells can be heard. In the middle of this sprawling city of more than 10 million Muslims, the Patriarch of Constantinople is celebrating Holy Communion, as his predecessors have done for almost 2,000 years.

The Patriarch is usually assisted by his two deacons. One of them, Father Tarasios, preaches in Greek but his first language is English.

"I grew up in Texas. One day I'm going to write a book and call it *A Texan in Constantinople*," he laughs. His grandparents emigrated from Greece to the United States, where Fr Tarasios became an Orthodox priest. "People ask me why I came here. In the US I had everything: my own house, a nice car. But what I didn't have was to be at the centre of Orthodoxy. Now I've become a part of everything I read about."

The Patriarch of Constantinople is the spiritual head of the world's Orthodox churches. But while he is spiritual leader to nearly 300 million Christians worldwide, today the Patriarch's own diocese of Greek Christians in Istanbul has dwindled to only 3,000.

Istanbul was once legendary for its mix of races and Greeks still call it by its old Greek name, Constantinople. But today the Greeks are leaving. "We don't even have enough people left to look after the churches," says Fr Tarasios. "I wish they'd stay, but I understand why they don't. They feel like second-class citizens here. They even have to be quiet speaking Greek in the streets, in case they offend somebody."

Fr Tarasios lives and works in the Patriarchate complex in

the Fener, or Phanar, district of the old city, the historic Greek quarter.

Now the few remaining Greeks have moved to the suburbs. Only priests remain. "Fener has become an enclave of fundamentalist Muslims," Fr Tarasios says. "Sometimes they walk past the Patriarchate, shaking their fists. They throw rubbish into the courtyard."

"I'm often asked why the Patriarch stays in Istanbul and doesn't move to Greece."



Fr Tarasios: Greeks feel like second-class citizens

People don't realise how long we've been here - far longer than the Turks.

The Patriarchate claims the church was established in the city AD36 by St Andrew, one of the 12 Apostles. The Ottoman Turks did not gain control of the city until 1453.

As the only Orthodox priest in Istanbul with English as a first language, Fr Tarasios does a lot of translation work. In the afternoons he takes visitors on tours of the churches in Fener. Before leaving the Patriarchate, he must change into a suit. Under Turkey's secular constitution, religious dress is forbidden in public.

At St Dimitrios, a beautiful old church full of valuable icons, only four services are

held a year. "There aren't enough priests to hold any more," he says. "There are only 50 priests left in Istanbul."

As we arrive at another church, two Muslim women shyly leave. They have come to drink Holy Water from the church, which is believed to cure infertility.

"Lots of Muslims come like this," says Fr Tarasios. "Newly wed couples come to the priests for a blessing, they believe it's more powerful than a blessing from an imam. You could say it's just superstition, but it shows they're aware of the Christian faith."

Fr Tarasios calls on Father Vassileios, the priest responsible for the churches in this area. There are no parishioners left and, of the services Fr Vassileios holds, most are funerals.

The Turkish authorities are causing problems for the Patriarchate. They closed down Turkey's only Orthodox theological school in 1971. "Without the theological school we can't train priests from the community here," Fr Tarasios says. "How will we train future Patriarchs?" Under Turkish law, the Patriarch must be a Turkish citizen.

At Christmas the Patriarch's cathedral was full. Before the Ottoman conquest the domed church of Hagia Sophia was the Patriarch's cathedral, but today the Patriarch has a new, smaller cathedral in Fener. Exchanging of gifts takes place on St Basil's Day, 1 January.

The last Greek families of Istanbul will start the day by dividing the new year's bread, a giant loaf. Slices will be cut for Christ, the Virgin Mary, for St Basil and for the Patriarch. Then the bread will be shared out. But every year, there are fewer Greeks left in Istanbul to share it.

JUSTIN HUGGLER

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# Is there gain in the City's euro pain?



JEREMY WARNER

*It is unrealistic to think London would not be discriminated against as an abstainer from the euro*

THE CITY is fully prepared, or so it believes. Over the next week we'll find out just how far this is true. What is certainly the case is that though many British businesses may still be refusing to acknowledge the seismic shift about to occur within the European economy, in the high octane driven world of the City's financial markets, hundreds of millions have already been spent on adapting IT and trading systems for the advent of the euro.

Investment and commercial banking, the two parts of the financial services industry most immediately affected by the launch of the new currency, have planned for "conversion weekend" in meticulous detail. From securities custody, through currency trading, how to deal with fractions and unmarketable units, to the most complicated of customised derivative instruments, the City is ready.

Thousands will see in the New Year in anxious sobriety - at their desks attempting to grapple with the closing exchange rates at which currencies will from tomorrow lock into the euro. Many IT and trading specialists will continue working through the weekend, testing and adapting their systems for last-minute glitches. Getting it right will give competitive edge over those who don't and could make the difference between big profits and losses.

Given the City's position as the world's biggest and most successful international financial centre, it would perhaps be surprising if the City were in anything other than a state of high preparedness. Over the past 15 years, the Square Mile has changed out of all recognition. The closed shop of largely domestic firms and partnerships it once was has been transformed into an open market place for international capital, it has become the location of choice for international bankers and securities traders everywhere. Virtually every complicated Eu-

ropean banking transaction of importance now takes place through London, and its markets - from foreign exchange to debt and futures - dominate the European time zone.

So being prepared comes with the territory. The bigger question is not so much whether London is practically capable of meeting the challenge of the euro - that scarcely seems in doubt; initially, at least, the City looks destined to dominate the euro markets. Rather it is whether the Square Mile can hope to maintain this pre-eminent position if Britain stays out of the single currency.

For Peter Levene, Lord Mayor of London, and to the extent that there is one, titular head of the City, there is no doubt that it can. Financial and business services such as IT, accountancy, consultancy and legal work now account for in excess of a quarter of the UK economy, and the City is a large part of that.

Quite apart from this vital position in the national economy, the wealth generated in the City has become core to the vitality and economic health of the capital, helping to sustain its vibrant arts scene, its property markets, its restaurants and a whole panoply of other service industries and jobs.

The consequences of losing out because of the launch of the euro

would therefore be disastrous. In this sense, the single currency might be regarded as a serious threat to the City. If your business is commission driven, it is obviously more lucrative to deal in 11 currencies than just one. The opportunity to pursue profitable trading strategies is also that much greater.

More importantly, rival European financial centres have always looked jealously over the Channel at their bigger London counterpart, and in recent years, Frankfurt in particular has been chasing London hard in certain markets, particularly German bond based derivatives. Are Frankfurt, Paris and Milan really going to allow what would in effect become an offshore centre to dominate markets in their own single currency?

Lord Levene is adamant that Europe needs the City as much as the City needs Europe. If the euro is to survive and prosper as a powerful reserve currency capable of looking the dollar in the face and attracting cheap foreign capital in the same way as the US does, it needs to develop deep and liquid capital markets. The City is uniquely placed to offer these markets, more so than any other centre, and to act as a conduit for foreign capital into Europe.

Key to the single currency's suc-

cess as a reserve currency will be the development of an integrated debt, or bond, market, both national and corporate. All the indications are that the City will dominate this eurobond market in the early years, but will it remain that way?

Already there are warning signs. The very location in Frankfurt of the European Central Bank will in itself act as a powerful magnet for markets. Physical proximity to policy makers still seems to matter in markets, even though advanced IT systems render it unnecessary.

More worrying, Brussels seems intent on removing some of the City's present competitive tax advantages. The most serious immediate threat is posed by the planned imposition of a 20 per cent withholding tax on income from bonds.

On the face of it, this would seem a quite innocuous piece of anti-avoidance tax harmonisation. All countries have withholding taxes, the deduction of tax at source, in some shape or form. In this country, employers pay salary net of income tax. Interest on building society accounts is also paid net of basic rate tax.

Non taxpayers then reclaim the tax from the Revenue at a later stage. However, to impose it on bonds might cause these markets to shift offshore to rival international centres where bonds can be traded gross, as well as acting

as a general deterrent to foreign capital.

Certainly, when such a tax was imposed in the US it caused a large part of the bond market to shift offshore. The euro dollar market was born. A large part of the City's present success is based on this single act of tax lunacy, since it persuaded many US investment banks to set up operations here in London and helped generate the critical mass of foreign interest and trading to push the City into the super league of financial centres.

At present, the planned scope of the tax is limited to individuals - or only about 10 per cent of the total Eurobond market - but there are proposals from a group of MEPs to extend it to companies as well. Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, has vowed to use Britain's veto to block the move and there is good reason to believe that Brussels might eventually accept the Corporation of London's case. If the effect was to cause a general flight of capital from Europe, that would plainly be bad for everyone, not just the City.

All the same, many see in these proposals a harbinger of things to come. Brussels and its Continental masters might seek to punish the City for being outside the euro. If Britain joins the single currency within a relatively short period of time, then the City can realistically

ly hope to retain its position as Europe's leading international centre. If it does not, then its chances would seem remote, notwithstanding Lord Levene's protestations to the contrary.

It is not realistic to think that Britain and the City would not in some way be discriminated against as long-term abstainers from the single currency, or that the integrated debt market so vital to the new currency's sustained health could tolerably be based outside Euroland. That would not be dissimilar to allowing the gilt market to be run out of the Bahamas.

If, on the other hand, the euro is a failure, then all bets are off. London would be left as the default centre of choice and in prime position to pick up the pieces. Already there are signs of capital flight from Euroland, albeit quite limited in scope. The extent to which that process gathers pace depends crucially on what type of single currency the euro becomes.

Will it be a liberalising, free market force across Europe, or will it mark the onset of ever greater centralised regulation, including centrally imposed tax harmonisation. That debate is only just beginning. The City has a powerful vested interest in making it the former, but it cannot do so if Britain remains outside.

## CBI chief hits out at Eurosceptics

THE CONFEDERATION of British Industry president yesterday cast aside the Euroscepticism of some of his senior colleagues when he called for Britain to become a key player in shaping the European Union.

In his New Year message, Sir Clive Thompson said that the next 12 months would be make or break for the UK in Europe. "It is crucial for Britain to play a major role in shaping the final outcome of the EU. Standing on the sidelines, watching others make decisions that affect us, will achieve nothing."

The most important issue is the euro, which is launched tomorrow. "We will soon see if one interest rate does work for 11 countries, as well as the effect of Britain's decision to stay out."

BY BARRIE CLEMENT

Those effects will be keenly felt by the business community. All this should contribute to a more grown-up debate about the single currency," Sir Clive said. Britain needed to influence decisions over whether Europe would be entrepreneurial with labour market flexibility and high growth, or whether it would settle for low growth, high taxes and regulation, he said.

Britain's absence from the euro would mean a "painful year" for the economy, said John Monks, general secretary of the Trades Union Council. "It is beginning to seem as if we have repeated the standard British error of coming too late to Europe to secure the best deal possible," he said.

## WORLD MARKETS

### LONDON

BLUE CHIPS ended the last trading day of the year looking decidedly ragged with Footsie down 58.9 points at 5,882.6. In largely technical trading, as investment houses attempted to square their books ahead of the launch of the euro, the index swung from an early 3.4 gain to a 132.5 loss before late buying cut the fall. Supporting shares bucked the trend, scoring modest gains. BICC, the cable and construction group, was the best performing 350 share, gaining 5.5p to 70.5p on expectations that takeover action will break out in the New Year.

Derek Pain, page 21

### NEW YORK

WITH MOST traders on holiday, and no figures to keep the eight-day rally running, Wall Street stocks traded down slightly during the day, with telecoms shares the biggest losers.

In early afternoon trading, the benchmark Dow Jones index had fallen 0.4 per cent to 9,284, while the Nasdaq index was down 0.7 per cent to 2,168.

"Stocks have moved up so dramatically that investors are beginning to realise that some large stocks have been overvalued," said one analyst.

### TOKYO

A SURGE in computer stocks and a slide in utility companies saw the Japanese benchmark Nikkei index close 5 points down at 13,842.

Kansai Electric Power, which provides electricity to the cities of Osaka and Kyoto, fell by 2 per cent as the yield on Japanese government bonds rose to 2.01 per cent, just under the yield implied by Kansai's last dividend payout.

"Bond prices are collapsing, driving yields up, and the people who bought these stocks for yield are moving into bonds," said one analyst.

### FRANKFURT

GERMAN SHARES drifted slowly downwards in light trading, with the DAX index closing 1 per cent lower at 5,006 on the last dealing session before the new year and the birth of the euro.

Telecoms shares continued to fall on concerns that an escalating price war in the German phone market would depress earnings.

Deutsche Telecom fell 2 per cent, while Mannesmann, the engineering company that owns Germany's largest mobile phone company, dropped 2.5 per cent.

### HONG KONG

IN THIN TRADING, Hong Kong's benchmark Hang Seng index dropped 1 per cent to close at 10,121, with investors sitting on the sidelines ahead of the New Year holiday.

HSBC, the territory's largest company by market capitalisation, fell nearly 1 per cent, as investors do not expect the proposed acquisition of the debt-laden Korea First Bank to be profitable for a number of years. Hong Kong Telecom, the city's largest telephone company, fell 1.5 per cent, after a newspaper article suggested that the company plans to cut international call rates.

## New Banking and Savings Interest Rates from Nationwide

### FROM 1ST JANUARY 1999 RATES FOR PERSONAL SAVERS

	Previous		New		Previous		New
	AER	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.		AER	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
CashBuilder				FlexiAccount			
£50,000 +	4.90%	4.90%	3.92%	£25,000 +	3.60%	3.60%	3.10%
£25,000 - £49,999	4.60%	4.60%	3.68%	£10,000 - £24,999	2.60%	2.60%	2.10%
£10,000 - £24,999	4.20%	4.20%	3.36%	£2,000 - £9,999	1.90%	1.90%	1.50%
£5,000 - £4,999	4.00%	4.00%	3.20%	£1 - £1,999	1.00%	1.00%	0.80%
£500 - £499	3.80%	3.80%	3.04%				
£1 - £499	1.00%	1.00%	0.80%	Special Renewal Bond			
CapitalBuilder				£100,000 +	7.70%	7.70%	6.16%
£50,000 +	5.90%	5.90%	4.72%	£50,000 - £49,999	7.30%	7.30%	5.84%
£25,000 - £49,999	5.60%	5.60%	4.48%	£25,000 - £49,999	7.10%	7.10%	5.68%
£10,000 - £24,999	5.30%	5.30%	4.24%	£10,000 - £24,999	6.90%	6.90%	5.44%
£1 - £9,999	5.10%	5.10%	4.08%	£1 - £9,999	6.80%	6.80%	5.44%
Monthly Income				InvestDirect			
£50,000 +	5.60%	5.60%	4.48%	£100,000 +	6.85%	6.85%	5.48%
£25,000 - £49,999	5.30%	5.30%	4.24%	£50,000 - £49,999	6.80%	6.80%	5.44%
£10,000 - £24,999	5.00%	5.00%	4.00%	£25,000 - £49,999	6.70%	6.70%	5.36%
£1 - £9,999	4.80%	4.80%	3.84%	£10,000 - £24,999	6.55%	6.55%	5.24%
The Smart Account				£1 - £9,999	6.40%	6.40%	5.12%
£1 +	7.38%	7.38%	5.80%	Members' Reward Bond Annual			
Smart 2 Save				£1 - £10,000	7.75%	7.75%	6.20%
£1 +	7.38%	7.38%	5.80%	Members' Reward Bond Monthly			
TESSA				£1 - £10,000	7.45%	7.45%	5.90%
£1 - £9,999	7.10%	7.10%	5.68%				
				Bonus Saver			
Tessa 2				£1 - £9,999	4.15%	4.15%	3.65%
£1 - £9,999	7.10%	7.10%	5.68%	Bonus 60* Monthly			
				£50,000 +	6.15%	6.15%	5.32%
				£25,000 - £49,999	5.65%	5.65%	5.12%
				£10,000 - £24,999	5.35%	5.35%	4.88%
				£5,000 - £4,999	5.05%	5.05%	4.64%
				£1 - £9,999	4.75%	4.75%	4.40%

\*Bonus 60 and Bonus 90 Monthly rates are based on the AER. Interest is calculated daily and paid quarterly on the first day of March, June, September and December. Interest is paid half-yearly on Treasury Trust accounts. Tessa 2 accounts are subject to a 11% out of 12 months rate and a 10% rate on the 12th month. The bonus is payable at the end of the 12th month. Tessa 2 accounts are subject to a 11% out of 12 months rate and a 10% rate on the 12th month. The bonus is payable at the end of the 12th month. Tessa 2 accounts are subject to a 11% out of 12 months rate and a 10% rate on the 12th month. The bonus is payable at the end of the 12th month.

### RATES FOR BUSINESS SAVERS

	Previous		New
	AER	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
BusinessInvestor			
£50,000 +	4.90%	4.90%	3.92%
£25,000 - £49,999	4.60%	4.60%	3.68%
£10,000 - £24,999	4.20%	4.20%	3.36%
£5,000 - £4,999	4.00%	4.00%	3.20%
£1 - £4,999	1.00%	1.00%	0.80%
Treasury Trust Account			
£1 +	2.62%	2.60%	2.08%
PortfolioInvestor			
£50,000 +	6.35%	6.20%	5.32%
£1 - £49,999	6.14%	6.00%	5.16%

If the account balance on BusinessInvestor falls below £25,000 interest will be paid at 0.50% p.a. Interest is calculated daily and paid quarterly on the first day of March, June, September and December. Interest is paid half-yearly on Treasury Trust accounts. PortfolioInvestor accounts are subject to a 11% out of 12 months rate and a 10% rate on the 12th month. The bonus is payable at the end of the 12th month.

### RATES FOR ACCOUNTS NO LONGER AVAILABLE TO NEW SAVERS

	Previous		New
	AER	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
Account Name	Balance		
Asset Reserve	£50,000 +	4.90%	4.90%
	£25,000 - £49,999	4.60%	4.60%
	£10,000 - £24,999	4.20%	4.20%
	£5,000 - £4,999	4.00%	4.00%
	£1 - £4,999	1.00%	1.00%
CapitalBuilder 180	£25,000 +	6.15%	6.15%
	£10,000 - £24,999	5.85%	5.85%
	£1 - £9,999	5.30%	5.30%
CapitalBuilder 90	£25,000 +	5.60%	5.60%
	£10,000 - £24,999	5.30%	5.30%
	£1 - £9,999	5.10%	5.10%
CapitalBuilder 90	£25,000 +	5.30%	5.30%
	£10,000 - £24,999	5.00%	5.00%
	£1 - £9,999	4.80%	4.80%
BonusBuilder	£25,000 +	4.60%	4.60%
	£10,000 - £24,999	4.20%	4.20%
	£5,000 - £4,999	4.00%	4.00%
	£1 - £4,999	1.00%	1.00%
IncomeBond	£10,000 +	5.80%	5.80%
	£1 - £9,999	5.50%	5.50%
TaxFree Option Instant	£25,000 +	4.60%	4.60%
	£10,000 - £24,999	4.20%	4.20%
	£5,000 - £4,999	4.00%	4.00%
	£1 - £4,999	1.00%	1.00%
TaxFree Option 90 Day	£25,000 +	5.60%	5.60%
	£10,000 - £24,999	5.30%	5.30%
	£1 - £9,999	5.10%	5.10%
TaxFree Option 180 Day	£25,000 +	6.15%	6.15%
	£10,000 - £24,999	5.85%	5.85%
	£1 - £9,999	5.30%	5.30%
DoubleBonus	£1 +	3.80%	3.80%
Bonus 90	£20,000 +	5.68%	5.68%
	£10,000 - £19,999	5.37%	5.37%
	£1 - £9,999	5.17%	5.17%
Subscription Share	£1 - £200 per month (or £400 joint)	7.40%	7.40%

If the account balance on Asset Reserve falls below £25,000 interest will be paid at 0.50% p.a. Interest is calculated daily and paid quarterly on the first day of March, June, September and December.

It pays to decide...

Nationwide

The World's No.1 Building Society

AER stands for Annual Equivalent Rate and indicates what the interest rate would be if interest was paid and added each year (including any bonuses). For information: Customers with an account other than a bond or investment account. See Your Guide to a Nationwide Investment Bond, that is not kept available to new savers. Customers can transfer money from any Nationwide account to any Nationwide account. Rates of 0.50% p.a. are available on the account during the calendar year. Customers opening an account with a new account, and transfer to any other account, or have their money back if they do not wish to use the account during the calendar year. This does not apply to bond or investment accounts. Customers with accounts no longer available are advised to seek advice on our current product range from their local branch. On all accounts except Tessa 2, £1, Treasury and Smart 2 Save. All accounts will normally be paid at the first day of the month after the anniversary date. Tax may be reclaimed from the Inland Revenue where the amount deducted exceeds an account holder's liability in tax. Interest may be paid at the gross rate, without deduction of tax, or on some bonds may be payable net of basic rate tax. Rates shown are rates of going up rates. Withdrawals within 14 days and after 14 days. It may have to be taken into account in order to ensure other rules. Customers liable to a higher rate of tax may have to pay additional income tax on the interest received. All rates quoted are variable. Not rates for new savers and are for illustrative purposes only. Rates shown are rates of going up rates. Withdrawals within 14 days and after 14 days. It may have to be taken into account in order to ensure other rules. Customers liable to a higher rate of tax may have to pay additional income tax on the interest received. All rates quoted are variable. Not rates for new savers and are for illustrative purposes only. Rates shown are rates of going up rates. 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[illegible]



# SPORT

## HEADLINES YOU THOUGHT YOU WOULD NEVER READ IN 1998

### Striker who keeps a carrot in his shorts

CARROTS WERE once reputed to improve a person's ability to see in the dark. However, it takes more than sharp eyesight to penetrate the dim depths of the intellect that conjured up the latest in a long line of eccentric, not to say ludicrous, goal celebrations that have begun to illuminate Brazilian club football.

One little number, acted out by Edmilson, involved the Atletico Mineiro striker pulling a carrot from his shorts after scoring the opening goal in a 2-0 victory over America and ostentatiously eating it in front of rival supporters.

So was Edmilson showing off the benefits of healthy eating for sportsmen? No, he was making fun of the America fans, whose team are known as the Rabbits.

Whatever the carrot act did for Edmilson's digestive system, it certainly did not go down well with America. One player, Dinho, was sent off for a vicious tackle on Edmilson during the second half in an apparent reprisal.

"I didn't want to offend anyone with the joke," Edmilson said, explaining that he kept the carrot in his shorts until scoring in the 20th minute. "Did I find it revolting to eat it? Of course not. I don't find my own body revolting." September

### Brazilian tackle causes a stir

THE BRAZILIAN footballer, Vampeta, sparked a controversy by agreeing to appear naked in a gay publication, *G Magazine*. "I am not gay, I'm doing it for the money," Vampeta - real name Marcos Andre Batista Santos - said, clearly not looking for fan mail. Vampeta's stunt, for which he will be paid \$50,000, has not gone down well with everyone.

Wanderley Luxemburgo, the Brazilian national coach and also coach at Vampeta's club side, Corinthians, had pleaded with his player not to pose until the end of the season, but Vampeta took the money and asked only that publication be delayed until the New Year. December

### Smoking is OK says coach

JAVIER CLEMENTE, Spain's World Cup coach, said in the aftermath of Paul Gascoigne's non-inclusion in the England World Cup squad that smoking and drinking could be compatible with playing football. "Smoking, in moderation, yes. And drinking in moderation too," he said. Moderation and social responsibility were the key, he said, and added that the fact that Gascoigne and his England colleague Teddy Sheringham had been seen smoking need not necessarily mean that they were unable to play football at the highest level.

"There's no problem, and besides Gascoigne and Sheringham are remarkable professionals on the field," he said. As for Spain's poor subsequent performance at France 98, it can't have been the fags and booze, can it? June



Strange but true (clockwise from top left): The supercar that launched a journalist's brief golfing career; Carrot man - Atletico Mineiro's vegetable-toting striker; Fred Done, the overconfident Manchester bookie; and the Mallorca goalposts that broke Hearts' hearts

### Bookmaker pays out twice

FRED DONE, a Manchester United supporting bookmaker, was so pleased with his side's big lead in the Premiership that two months before the season finished he paid all the punters who had backed the Red Devils for the title at his 115 shops in the north and Wales.

Such generosity did not, at the time, seem misplaced as United were runaway leaders and Done's pay-out of around £50,000 was all good publicity, thank you very much.

Then came Arsenal's late surge for the title, and Done, facing potential liabilities of £200,000 if the Gunners won, put a brave face on events. "I'm sure Fergie's not waving any white flags yet and while there's games still to be played there's still hope," he said. Arsene Wenger's side ended that. Speculating on how events would change his life, Done said: "I'm going on holiday to Butlin's rather than the Bahamas." March

### Boxer floored by pregnancy

BOXERS PULLING out of fights due to injury or illness is hardly a major surprise. One Mexican fighter, however, withdrew from her bout because she was pregnant.

After several tests confirmed that Maria de las Nieves Garcia, 22, was with child, she was pulled from her bout against Christy Martin on the undercard of what would have been the Evander Holyfield-Henry Akwande heavyweight title fight (which itself was called off because of Akwande's illness). Nieves Garcia was 21 weeks pregnant. "She had no idea she was pregnant," said Bobby Goodman, Madison Square Garden's director of boxing.

"She seemed to be dejected that she was not fighting," Goodman said, adding in response to a question: "No, she didn't appear to be gushing that she was pregnant."

Nieves Garcia was scheduled to earn £9,500 to fight Martin, the World Boxing Council's women's lightweight champion. June

### Wilson 'betrayed' by O'Sullivan

JULIAN WILSON, one of the BBC's most mild-mannered and respected sports correspondents, spoke publicly for the first time of the revelation in his autobiography that he "felt betrayed" by Peter O'Sullivan, his colleague for decades, and a man seemingly untouched by even the tiniest hint of nastiness.

Wilson said the falling-out began over when O'Sullivan would retire. Wilson claims to be turned down the job of commentating for ITV in 1981 because O'Sullivan had told him he intended to retire at the age of 65 in 1983. However, O'Sullivan subsequently informed Wilson that this "retirement" would be from journalism, not commentating.

"I was quite shattered, but the ITV job had gone," Wilson wrote. "I felt betrayed."

Asked for his reaction, O'Sullivan responded: "I haven't read the book so I am not in a position to comment. I hope the book does well, that's all." September

### Marathon man runs on alcohol

A VINTAGE performance was expected from Portugal's Antonio Pinto as he sought to defend his London Marathon title.

As befits a man who has his own vineyard, Pinto admitted to being partial to a glass or two of wine. Well, not just a glass, but a bottle or more. Four bottles, to be precise, each week. "Sometimes more than four," he said before running this year.

Asked by a Portuguese journalist if he also upheld the national tradition of a little snifter of cognac in the morning, he replied once again in the affirmative.

Wine, Pinto said, was full of vitamins, and his drinking was a natural complement to eating the kind of meals he enjoyed back home.

In the race in London, Pinto finished third, behind Spain's Abel Anton and Morocco's Abdelkader El Mouazziz. A sign of the wines, perhaps? April

### When goalposts were moved

BEFORE THE second leg of the European Cup-Winners' Cup he against Mallorca, Hearts' officials noticed the goalposts were even due to a slope on the pitch.

The base of one post was 10cm lower than the other a few yards away. A verbal complaint was made to a Uefa delegate and the match went ahead. "We only agreed to play because of our supporters and the security issue," Chris Robinson, Hearts' chief executive, said. "The goalposts have quite literally been moved."

Hearts drew 1-1 on the night and lost on aggregate, but still felt they would win through on principle. Unfortunately, they did not, their case being dismissed on a technicality - because the original complaint had not been made in writing. Jim Jeffries, Hearts' manager, said: "I believe Chris has said that if the protest had been written on the back of a fag packet then it would have been OK." October

### 'Women must flash more flesh'

WOMEN'S TEAMS competing in the Volleyball World Championships in Tokuyama have been told that in the interests of the sport they must expose more flesh. The naked truth is that beach volleyball, largely performed in states of near-nudity by part-time models, has cast its dowdier relative in an unfavourable light, and the authorities have introduced measures to make the six-a-side version more appealing to spectators.

Brightly coloured balls are among the innovations, but the most controversial of the new ideas is the stipulation that the women must wear shorts only half as long as the men. The shorter shorts should be "tight in waist and length" and "cut in an upward angle towards the top of the leg". The new rules also "encourage", without ordering, women to wear a one-piece swimsuit-style outfit rather than shorts and top.

Not surprisingly, this brave semi-nude new world met with little approval from the teams. "Soon only models will be allowed on the volleyball court," one South American player complained. November

### Hole-in-one secures car

A NEWSPAPER'S golf correspondent had to consider whether to turn professional in order to be able to accept a prize of a £189,000 Lamborghini for sinking a hole-in-one.

Derek Lawrenson, of the *Sunday Telegraph*, won the car for his effort at a charity golf day featuring the England World Cup football squad at Mill Ride, Ascot. Lawrenson, a left-hander with a handicap of eight, is a Liverpool supporter and achieved his feat in the company of Paul Ince and Steve McManaman.

"Now I have to decide whether to turn down the prize or turn professional," he said, acknowledging the rules that say amateurs cannot accept more than £200 in prizes per hole and professionals are unable to compete in amateur tournaments. Lawrenson gave the matter a few seconds thought before accepting the supercar. He has since sold the motor, however, for a reported £100,000 after discovering the insurance would have cost him £3,000 a year. May

### Car secures hole-in-one

IT WAS just a normal day for Nancy Bachand. Trundling along a Massachusetts highway at a steady 30mph in her Toyota, she was minding her own business until Todd Obuchowski entered her life, or rather his golf ball did.

Obuchowski, a 34-year-old sheet metal worker, was enjoying a round at Haydenville's Beaver Brook course when he hit a wayward tee shot at the 116-yard, par-three fourth hole. The ball shot over the green and on to the road, where it ricocheted off the passenger side of Bachand's car and rolled into the cup for a hole-in-one.

"I didn't know for sure until all these guys started shouting," Obuchowski said. The damage to the car worked out at \$90. May

NICK HARRIS

## AND THE HEADLINES YOU DID NOT SEE....

Schumacher confesses his 'deep love' for Coulthard

Tony McCoy: 'OK, so I slap my horses a bit. They love it'

Alcock: 'Di Canio was only tickling' Glenn Hoddle: 'I was wrong'

## Madness of underdogs and Englishmen in favour

NOTHING, IN my mind anyway, hinders the cause of sport in this country more than the sort of reaction there has been in some quarters this week to a remarkable effort by England's cricketers.

If unquestionably a boost to national morale, it hardly justified the souvenir section put out by one popular print or suggestions that English cricket is in a much healthier state than the first three Tests had led us to imagine. The sobering facts are that England's success did not come until after Australia retained the Ashes and, but for a storm that broke over Brisbane last month, they would



KEN JONES

have been three down in the series.

It may be that the impetus of Melbourne will be maintained in Sydney, but yet again the weight of unreasonable expect-

tation bears down on promise. The year we are about to leave behind us provided glaring examples of this largely British phenomenon.

Going back a little further, to the summer of 1997, a great deal of fuss was made about England's success in the Tournoi de France, a competition taken rather more lightly by Brazil, France and Italy.

From what I saw on television, neither Italy nor France looked fully geared up against England and it did not seem that Brazil were bearing right down on the throttle.

However, the impression conveyed by reports in news-

papers and across the airwaves, abetted by Glenn Hoddle's imprudent estimate, was that England would be a major threat in the 1998 World Cup finals. A personal point of view was that England were not good enough to progress beyond the quarter-finals, but this was contrary to national expectations.

The feeling grew up, and it still thrives in many minds, including Hoddle's, that England were on their way to winning the World Cup until the loss of David Beckham against Argentina caused a rearward action and the agony of defeat in a penalty shoot-out.

Through the refraction of time, England's performance in France is made to look better than it was. Two victories, two defeats. Romania proved too cunning, Tunisia were not up to much and Colombia played without real purpose.

It is not the intention to denigrate England's efforts, merely to put things into perspective, which is not, unfortunately, a widespread habit. At this time of the year there is a tendency, natural I suppose, to take encouragement from the effect recent events may have on the future.

On television the other night a sports commentator ad-

vanced the view that England's success in Melbourne augured well for next summer's cricket World Cup. With the rugby World Cup in mind, he drew similar encouragement from England's defeat of South Africa and how close Wales came to beating them.

This is all very well and good but one thing does not necessarily lead to another or provide absolute proof of improvement.

For example, claims put forward for the Premiership, particularly by its main sponsors, Sky Television, have not been borne out by efforts in the European competitions. Manchester United are still there

but Arsenal, if admittedly weakened by injuries and suspensions, were soon out of it. The Premier League is exciting but the heroes are invariably found out when tested against the more measured tempo favoured by foreign opposition. You can go on and on like this, and a long journey it becomes, but the general response to England's victory is encouragingly one of pleasure rather than bluster. That of a nation at last coming to terms with the loss of historical sporting supremacy.

Good things can come from acquiring a proper sense of reality, from understanding that

we have no divine right to succeed at games our ancestors invented.

England's victory in Melbourne put a smile on plenty of faces, not least because it was unexpected. From being a team that had failed to bat with much efficiency, bowl with any sustained penetration and hold comparatively simple catches, England had overcome the acknowledged leaders of world cricket.

Among life's little dilemmas is the problem of the dedicated underdog who finds himself in danger of becoming an upperdog. It can be a very unsettling thing. Ask any Englishman.



August  
Gam  
War

trainers would be coming here are all wrong. There is definitely nobody on the shortlist to replace David Nicholson. There is no secret here. I am happy with David, but if you say to me when is David retiring that is another question and I don't know. But I can state that we have agreed to discuss that as and when the matter arises."

■ Saturday's Ayr meeting must pass a 2.30pm inspection today. Part of the track is under water.

## MAGUIRE'S ROLLERCOASTER RIDING CAREER



on Bank at the last fence with  
ey

**FORM GUIDE**  
**Around The Gale:** Lightly raced since last success in 1986. Below his best last term, though tar 4 lengths 4th of 5 to Martlet Boy at Stratford (3m hcup ch, good) in March.  
**Easley Joker:** Slipping in weights but needs to step up on latest 25 lengths 4th of 6 to

**Segment:** Early-season Market Rasen and Worcester winner. Probably festered by narrow 2nd to Twin Falls at Fontwell in October and looks vulnerable at this mark  
**Mr Smuggles:** Completed 4-furler from 2nd higher in April '97. Fair comeback at Chesham in Oct but well-beaten 3rd of 4 at Skenbe in November (2m handicap, soft) since  
**Signs:** Regularly in the money but has been a little off his best. Set out in race won by Corringford Gale at Uttoxeter (2m) but good to soft in Nov. Go down  
**River Bly:** Best race for a while when beat Nick by Philetic at Windsor (3m) handicap, good to soft at this mark but disappointing since and not easy to rely on  
**High Mould:** Improved when 2 lengths 3rd of 2 to Slay On Ayre at Bangor (2m) handicap, good to soft last time. 4th out of handicap, but no loss cause

**VERDICT:** Something of a lottery. Among The Gae, Easyby Joker and Cardinal

Rolls all capable of winning at their best form, but CALLEVA STAR showed signs of a comeback. He was the only horse to show improvement. He has a more loathsome weight here with Robert Widger aboard and could be the value bet over the progressive High Wood, who still makes too many mistakes to be trusted.

**3.50 CHRISTMAS STANDARD OPEN NH FLAT RACE (CLASS 1)**  
171, 172 and 220 added 220 Penalty Value £1,445

1	STORM AGAIN R Bowering P W 10 11 4	1	J A McCarthy	1	GOITON
2	CACCINI 220 Lord (Mia Day) Mies Day 8 11 4	2	D O'Sullivan	2	GOITON
3	CALCIN 220 Lord (Mia Day) Mies Day 8 11 4	3	D O'Sullivan	3	GOITON
4	CASA FINA Peter R Moseley M Pops 3 11 4	4	G Supple	4	GOITON
5	ALAN BROWNE Alan Browne Alan Browne 4 11 4	5	G Supple	5	GOITON
6	GET ON GEORGE Joly Matthews S Brooker 4 11 4	6	G Supple	6	GOITON
7	HERALD MERRY 10 J Ford Mies A Steel 8 11 4	7	G Supple	7	GOITON
8	KINGCROFT Fredrick King 4 11 4	8	G Supple	8	GOITON
9	KING WIZARD 540 The Racing Hares P Hobbs 4 11 4	9	G Supple	9	GOITON
10	MEDWAYS 20 (B) Richard Edwards B Pelling 8 11 4	10	G Supple	10	GOITON
11	ALL AT ONCE 10 J Ford Mies A Steel 8 11 4	11	G Supple	11	GOITON
12	PUZZLEMAN 10 (J) C Jock D Caro 5 11 4	12	G Supple	12	GOITON
13	RED MIST (Merch) Mies Mies H Knight 4 11 4	13	G Supple	13	GOITON
14	SACRED BLIND 20 (B) Richard Edwards B Pelling 8 11 4	14	G Supple	14	GOITON
15	SUNLIT SOL (P) Frances J Biddis 4 11 4	15	G Supple	15	GOITON
16	STAR'S REVENUE 20 (B) M McMillan M McMillan 5 11 4	16	G Supple	16	GOITON
17	THE TWO PAWS 20 (B) Pops 3 11 4	17	G Supple	17	GOITON
18	ISLAND MIST 10 (B) Sumner H Curtis 6 10 10	18	G Supple	18	GOITON
19	WATER LATER 10 (B) Sumner H Curtis 6 10 10	19	G Supple	19	GOITON
20	WATER LATER 10 (B) Sumner H Curtis 6 10 10	20	G Supple	20	GOITON

[illegible]

	C	H	L	S	T
Cardinal Hats	11-4	10-3	7-2	7-2	3-1
Rocky Jockey	8-1	11-2	8-1	6-1	6-1
Hawkeston Sam	11-2	5-1	9-2	11-2	6-1
Galileo Star	7-1	6-1	6-1	5-1	5-1
Around The Gate	9-1	9-1	8-1	8-1	8-1
Pumder Boy	7-1	9-1	8-1	8-1	8-1
My Swaggle	8-1	10-1	8-1	10-1	8-1
River Bay	11-1	11-1	10-1	10-1	8-1
Sagebrush	10-1	8-1	11-1	9-1	10-1
High Mold	14-1	12-1	9-1	11-1	12-1

Each entry a roll of the dice, places 1, 2, 3

C: Coral H: Hiliam H: L: Ladbrooks S: Stanley T: Tote

[illegible]











# Ward ready to fight for his Rovers place

ASHLEY WARD explained yesterday that a "gentleman's agreement" had paved the way for his £4.5m move back to the Premiership.

After signing a four-and-a-half year contract with Blackburn Rovers, the 28-year-old added that he was not worried about joining a club brimming with forwards. The striker said he had no fears about competing against the likes of Chris Sutton. Kevin Gallacher, Nathan Blake and Kevin Davies after his move from Barnsley. "I've never made any secret of my ambitions to get back into the Premiership and Barnsley knew that," he said. "We had a gentleman's agreement that they wouldn't try to stand in my way if clubs such as Blackburn Rovers came in for me. Fair play to the chairman, John Dennis, he has been as good as his word. "I expect to have to fight for a first-team place. It would be disappointing if a club like this allowed anyone the luxury of just walking into the side. There

FOOTBALL  
BY KIERAN DALEY

are a lot of talented players here and there are certainly a lot of top strikers about. All I want to do is to make sure that I get into the team and stay there."

Under the seven-day rule, Ward will not be eligible to play in Blackburn's FA Cup tie against Charlton Athletic at Ewood Park on Saturday.

Blackburn's manager, Brian Kidd, made Ward his second major signing after recruiting the Northern Ireland winger, Keith Gillespie, from Newcastle United a couple of weeks ago.

Kidd said of his new signing: "Ashley is a link player, someone who can hold the line while we try to get the ball forward and play in the opposition's half. He's a target man if you like but he gets his fair share of goals along the way."

"I've admired him for a while, you always look at the type of players you would want

in your team and he is one of them. I know people will say we have a lot of strikers here now and I am also aware that no player is happy when he's not playing. But I must do what's best for the club and competition for places is a must. It gives you the cutting edge."

John Aloisi, the Coventry City striker, has apologised to Portsmouth fans for leaving Fratton Park on the cheap, and said he fears for the future of the First Division club.

The £1.5m-rated Aloisi, who scored his first Premiership goal against Tottenham at the weekend, moved to Highfield Road for only £650,000 two weeks ago to ease Pompey's financial problems.

Aloisi, who had scored 17 goals this season before his move to the Sky Blues, said: "I still talk to people down there and the fans are not happy that the chairman is selling so many players. I feel so sorry for the supporters who were brilliant to me and I wanted the best for them. They were angry when I was sold, and going on the cheap did them no favours. "But I had no other choice than to come to Coventry. The manager [Alan Ball] also had no say in the matter. He is also not happy and I really do fear for the future of the club now."

Meanwhile Coventry's almost annual battle against relegation from the Premiership - they have now gone seven games without a win - has suffered a double setback with the suspension from 9 January of Stephen Froggatt and George Boateng, who have both reached the five-bookings mark.



Rudi Gullit (right) introduces Newcastle's new signing, Didier Domi, to St James' Park yesterday

## Reilly not ready to risk recall for Wright

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

THE UNVEILING of Huddersfield's new half-back pairing will have to wait, because Nigel Wright is not yet ready for action. The former England and Great Britain Under-21 stand-off, thrown a lifeline by Huddersfield after being released by Wigan because of a string of injury problems, is due to form a partnership with the Test scrum-half, Bobbie Goulding, to lift his new side away from the bottom spot in Super League they occupied last season.

However, the new Huddersfield coach, Malcolm Reilly, has decided against risking Wright in the New Year's Day match against Halifax. "After being out of the game for so long, he needs a bit longer to get himself organised," Reilly said.

Also missing will be Huddersfield's new Australian signing, David Boughton, but they expect to be otherwise at full-strength.

Great Britain's current first choice stand-off, Iestyn Harris, returns to Leeds' team for their friendly against Castleford the same day. Harris missed the Boxing Day game against Halifax with a groin strain, but has been passed fit to take his club position of full-back tomorrow.

Leeds also have their two Australians, Brad Godden and Marc Glanville. Back in their side, but two teenagers of whom great things are expected this season, Karl Pratt and Kevin Sinfield, retain their places.

Leeds' chief executive, Gary Hetherington, wants to organise a testimonial match for the wife and two children of Roy Powell, the former Leeds player who died at the age of 33 after collapsing at training with Rochdale Hornets this week. Hetherington hopes to stage a match involving players from the four Yorkshire clubs for which Powell played - Leeds, Bradford, Featherstone and Batley - next month.

Rochdale have already decided to put the proceeds from their New Year derby against Oldham into a fund for the family. The players will wear black bands, in memory of Powell and another Hornets player, Karl Marriott, who also died suddenly two months ago.

Bramley, Leeds' tenants at Headingley, have pulled off a coup by signing the former Sheffield Eagles prop, Danny McAllister, from the defunct Gold Coast Chargers.

The Super League newcomers, Gateshead, have been told by Hull KR that their Papua New Guinea stand-off, Stanley Gene, is under contract and not available for transfer.

## Kinnear's rich feeling

JOE KINNEAR the Wimbledon manager, is playing a cat and mouse game with football's ruthless agents - and winning.

Where Kinnear once had to let players go when a big cash offer came in, he can now say no. The lure of transfers to the likes of Manchester United, Arsenal and Liverpool no longer holds sway for the club's promising stars.

Instead, Kinnear is able to hold on to what he sees as the future of the club as they sign

five, six and seven-year deals. He explained: "I'm no longer under pressure to sell. Gates have gone up to an average of 18,000 and when we started out it was 6,000."

"We're now reaping the rewards of being able to stay in the Premiership. Previously, I've always had my own budget. There's never been money put into the club. This year I've not had to sell. It's allowed Sam Hammam to invest and me to build the squad."

# Achilles tendency strikes Gloucester

MUST be catching. Gloucester's most expensive signing of the season, the former Wales flanker and captain Kingsley Jones, will miss the rest of the Premiership campaign after rupturing an Achilles tendon during the narrow defeat at Wasps last Sunday, thereby emulating Jon Preston, his direct counterpart at neighbouring Bath, who managed to prang himself in identical fashion last month ago. While it is not for their lack, neither of the West Country's fallen giants would have any luck at all.

Jones' Premiership career

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWITT

was only 160 minutes old when he suffered one of the most painful injuries in the medical lexicon and while he lasted 140 minutes longer than Preston, who barely had time to lace up his boots before being forced to swap one of them for a plaster cast, it was not quite what the Cherry and Whites had in mind when they signed him from Ebbw Vale in November. "He's had an operation and he's looking at six months on the sidelines," John Fidler, the

Gloucester team manager, said.

Ironically, Gloucester meet Bath at Kingsholm on Saturday in a derby of profound significance; both sides are on the slide after a run of Premiership defeats and the respective coaches, Richard Hill and Andy Robinson, are beginning to feel the heat. Gloucester shelved plans to name their side yesterday - Philippe Saint-Andre, their French international wing, is struggling with a thigh strain - and while Bath were happy to reveal their hand, there was still a doubt over Dan Lyle, the influential American

No 8, who lost almost a stone in weight to the virus that laid him low last week.

Jon Callard will play, however, a decision that leaves Maft Perry among the replacements despite being England's pre-eminent full-back. Bath pulled the same stunt a little under a year ago when they recalled Callard to kick the goals against Brive in the Heineken Cup final and it is a sign of their desperation that they feel obliged to repeat the gamble.

Bristol, the third and, for the time being, lowliest of the traditional West Country triumvirate, plan to announce a new

forwards coach next week following the departure of David Egeon. The former Bath and England No 8 cited business and family reasons for his decision. "My wife is expecting in February and I have too much on my plate," he explained.

Bob Dwyer, director of rugby at the Memorial Ground, has already lined up a replacement and expects to confirm the appointment before his side's Tetley's Bitter Cup match with London Irish on Sunday week. Darryl Jones, who split the coaching duties with Egeon last season, will continue in his role as backs specialist.

## Duff sets North on the way to victory

JOANNE DUFF, the Loughborough Students' sweeper, set North on the way to their first Women's Under-21 title with a first-minute penalty corner strike as they overcame the holders, Midlands, 3-3 at Milton Keynes yesterday.

The match should have been over when, in the 17th minute, Clare Hessewood added a second for North, but Kate O'Riley pulled one back from a penalty stroke. Sally Wright scored a South equaliser seven minutes into the second half but North's winner came from Sandeep Kaur in the 57th minute.

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

Midlands had flattered to deceive earlier when they were held to a 1-1 draw with West. O'Riley put them ahead with Nina Emery equalising midway through the second half.

Also earlier, South had overcome a two-goal deficit to draw 3-3 with North in an exciting game in which their goalkeeper, Beth Storry, had been outstanding. South earned their only victory over West thanks to a Vicky Goodacre goal.

### BASEBALL

Mark McGwire, who hit a record 70 home runs for the St Louis Cardinals last season, has been named the Associated Press Male Athlete of the year.

### BOXING

A newspaper report stating that the "fight of the aged" bout between Holmes and George Foreman was called off was yesterday denied by the promoter Roger Svinn, who said the contest would proceed in the Houston Astrodome on 23 January.

### CRICKET

NEW ZEALAND SOUND (for third test v India, Hamilton, starting Saturday): S P Fleming (captain), M J Slater, M D Bell, R G Twose, C O McMillan, C L Cairns, A C Parore (wicket-keeper), D T Nash, D J Vettori, S B Doull, G J Carter, P J Woan.

### DARTS

SKOL PDC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (Circus Tavern, Purfleet) First round: B Anderson (Eng) bt K Deller (Eng) 3-2; P Taylor (Eng) bt R Harding (Eng) 3-0; Line (Eng) bt P Lim (US) 3-0. Second round: C Lazzarini (Eng) bt S Brown (US) 3-0; D Smith (Eng) bt M Manning (Eng) 3-1; P Marley (Eng) bt G Seddard (Eng) 3-0; A Warriner (Eng) bt H Robinson (Eng) 3-2.

### FOOTBALL

Hartlepool United are lining up a bid to resurrect Peter Beardsley's playing career. The former England international has been contacted by the Victoria Park club after being released by Kevin Keegan's Fulham at the beginning of the month. Burnley have broken their transfer record - spending £750,000 - to re-sign their former defender Steve Davis from Luton. Wigan have sold Leigh Jenkinson to Hearts for £50,000. The former

### SPORTING DIGEST

Coventry winger, 29, joined Wigan from St Johnstone on a free transfer under the Bosman ruling at the start of this season but only started six games for the Second Division club. Hearts have also signed Derek Lilley, the former Morton striker, on loan from Leeds United. RESCHEDULED DATES: FA Carling Premiership: Man Utd v Leicester v Leeds from Sat 27 Feb; Nationwide Football League: Tue, 26 Jan Plymouth v Cardiff (from Sat 2 Jan); Sun 29 Jan: Peterborough v Millwall (from Sat 27 Jan). HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND: Cup Final second leg: Col v City 1 Shamrock Rovers 0 (rept 2-1). POINTS LEAGUE CUP Group One: Hartlepool 0 Middlesbrough 4. TUESDAY'S LATE RESULTS: FA Carling Premiership: Chelsea 0 Manchester Utd 0; Leeds 2 Walsley 2; Nationwide Football League: First Division: Norwich 1 Walsley 1; Second Division: Gillingham 1 Luton 1; Third Division: Lincoln 1 Doncaster 1; Fourth Division: Exeter 1; Football League Cup: Second round: Birmingham 1 Huddersfield 1; Third round: Arsenal 1; Football League Cup: Second round: Birmingham 1 Huddersfield 1; Third round: Arsenal 1; Football League Cup: Second round: Birmingham 1 Huddersfield 1; Third round: Arsenal 1.

### SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE

Manchester ... 19 15 2 1 7 37 32  
Cardiff ... 19 15 3 0 1 77 41 31  
Wideningham ... 20 11 7 0 2 70 62 24  
Ayr ... 18 7 8 3 0 53 60 17  
Blackburn ... 20 7 10 1 2 63 73 17  
Sheffield ... 19 6 9 1 2 58 62 16  
Newcastle ... 21 6 12 2 1 58 82 15  
London ... 20 11 2 2 51 83 14

### NORDIC SKIING

WORLD CUP (Oberstdorf, Ger) Combined events: 1 H Manninen (Fin) 2,3; 2 Jani (Fin) 3; 3 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 4; 4 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 5; 5 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 6; 6 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 7; 7 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 8; 8 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 9; 9 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 10; 10 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 11; 11 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 12; 12 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 13; 13 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 14; 14 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 15; 15 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 16; 16 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 17; 17 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 18; 18 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 19; 19 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 20; 20 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 21; 21 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 22; 22 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 23; 23 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 24; 24 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 25; 25 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 26; 26 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 27; 27 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 28; 28 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 29; 29 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 30; 30 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 31; 31 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 32; 32 J. R. Vartiainen (Fin) 33; 33 J. R. 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# SPORT

ENGLAND TO FACE SPIN WIZARD WARNE P25 • NICHOLSON STILL KING OF THE CASTLE P24

## Red mist rises for men in black

BY TRADITION, the Christmas football programme sorts out the contenders from the pretenders. This year it seems to have been operating to an entirely different agenda. If Philip Don, the Premier League referees' officer, had wanted to create an exercise with which to examine the way the English game is conducted by its officials, he could hardly have invented a more striking test. Half a dozen sendings-off appeared to confirm the view of English refereeing widely held abroad - in Italy, for example, where an official giving a lax or inconsistent performance is said to have conducted his arbitration *all'inglese*.

In Tuesday night's clash of potential champions at Stamford Bridge, Mike Riley seemed to change his mind over giving Franck Leboeuf a second yellow card for a 79th-minute foul on David Beckham,

thus allowing the Chelsea captain to stay on the field and complete his side's goalless draw against Manchester United. Not surprisingly, Alex Ferguson, the United manager, thought he should have been sent off. More unexpectedly, Leboeuf and his coach, Gianluca Vialli, agreed.

Riley defended his decision yesterday, and was supported by Don, who had been stung by Ferguson's accusation that he had imposed "his vision of football" on the Premier League's officials.

"I do not issue instructions to referees," Don said. "Only FIFA and the FA can issue those instructions. At the beginning of the season all clubs are invited to send their manager to a meeting with me where we discuss the law changes and the interpretations. I shall leave you to draw your own conclusions as to whether or



**RICHARD WILLIAMS**

*Fifa's desire to remove violence from football has confused English referees*

Not, presumably - although the man in charge of England's top referees perhaps ought to think again about the

wisdom of using such elliptical formulations when delivering his views.

The Stamford Bridge incident followed several controversial expulsions over the weekend. At Blackburn on Saturday Dermot Gallagher listened to his linesman's advice and sent off Michael Oakes, the Aston Villa goalkeeper, for handling the ball outside his area. Later, having looked at the video, Gallagher announced that he would be asking the FA to quash the player's automatic one-match ban.

On Monday, four of the day's eight Premier League matches featured dismissals, all of them disputed. No one argued about the second yellow card for Dejan Stefanovic of Sheffield Wednesday against Aston Villa; both managers, however, questioned his first caution. Television suggested not merely that Patrick Vieira's red card for the

use of an elbow against Neil Redfearn had been provoked by the Charlton player's illegitimate harrrying, but also that its effect was exaggerated by Redfearn's play-acting. Paulo Wanchope's pugilistic reaction to Andy Townsend's vicious tackle was enough to see the Derby forward expelled, but not his Middlesbrough adversary.

Dietmar Hamann's case resembled Leboeuf's in that the German defender's first caution was triggered by a far worse offence - a damaging foul on Steve McManaman - than the one that brought a second yellow card for the Newcastle player.

It may be no more than a coincidence that all five men sent off for violent conduct - Stefanovic, Vieira, Wanchope, Hamann and Leboeuf - are foreign imports, although it supports the contention that such

players are unfairly treated, a view voiced by Vialli after the recent Paolo di Canio affair.

More worrying, whatever the rights or wrongs of individual cases, is the impression of judicial inconsistency. Our officials no longer benefit from an assumption of British fair-play which meant that when Jack Taylor gave a penalty to West Germany in the first minute of the 1974 World Cup final, or Clive Thomas whistled for full-time as Zico's header zoomed towards the net eight seconds into injury time of Brazil v Sweden four years later, their objective judgement was not in question, although (in the latter case, at least) some may have wondered about their common sense.

Fifa's desire to remove the last vestiges of physical contact from football, inspired by the intention of its new president, Sepp Blatter, to make it safe for

children and sponsors, appears to have confused the English - although, to judge from what one sees on television, virtually no one else seems in such a quandary. In Serie A, for instance, players argue with referees within a framework of common acceptance of the meaning and intention of the game's laws.

Philip Don believes that full-time salaried referees are the answer, and is a member of a four-man working party currently looking at the wider implications of his plan, which would see up to six such officials appointed in time for the start of next season. If the Premier League chairman rejects his proposal at their next meeting in March, he will suggest an increase in the referees' £400 match fee and expenses, bringing them closer to the rate for the job in other major European leagues.

English football needs to take serious steps to fend off the growing demand for the use of a fourth official, with access to video replays during matches - a development that would do irreparable harm to the game. The standard of linesmen, which seems to have deteriorated markedly since they were rechristened "referees' assistants", demands particular attention.

To some extent, the problem has been created by television's desire to participate in the game it subsidises, and to make use of its evolving technology. But TV replays are never going to be subject to restriction. And again, the Italian example suggests that their influence need not be destructive. All it takes, in a game that will never be in a better position to throw money at a major problem, is a willingness to behave like professionals.

## Gullit declares £4m Domi a shrewd deal

IF THE increasingly demanding followers of Newcastle United were wondering what Ruud Gullit would be presenting this Christmas, then the manager answered their enquiries yesterday by unveiling a reassuringly expensive defender.

The left-back Didier Domi completed a £3.25m move from Paris St-Germain to St James' Park when he signed a four-and-a-half-year contract which will include a further £750,000 based on appearances. Not bad for a 20-year-old who has yet to break into the senior French side.

Gullit defended the decision to invest in youth. "Nowadays, the youth players are also getting more expensive, especially when it is an international and someone who has already played for several seasons for Paris St-Germain," he said. Domi was not registered in time to figure in Saturday's FA Cup third-round tie with First Division Crystal Palace.

Gerard Houllier was also seeking to beef up his Liverpool squad yesterday, with the defender Frode Kippe looking set to become the latest Norwegian to arrive at Anfield and the hunt for a new goalkeeper uppermost in the manager's priorities. Kippe, a 19-year-old centre-

### FOOTBALL

BY ANDREW MARTIN

back from Lillestrøm, has been signed for an initial fee of £700,000, rising to around £2m if he proves a success.

Houllier has given the Italian club Salernitana 48 hours to decide whether to accept Liverpool's £2.6m offer for the Cameroon defender Rigobert Song. Houllier is also chasing Dundee's £1m-rated keeper Robert Douglas to replace the American Brad Friedel, who is unlikely to be granted a new work permit as he has made so few appearances this season. David James is the No 1 but his deal has just 18 months to run.

One goalkeeper likely to be making a swift exit from the Premiership at the end of the season is Aston Villa's Mark Bosnich, who will hold talks with Roma this weekend.

Coventry have signed 20-year-old Danish keeper Morten Hyldgaard for £200,000 from Ilkesh and agreed a loan deal for the Venezia striker, Stefano Gioacchini. They have sold defender Jean-Guy Wallemme to Sochaux for £400,000.

Domi photograph, page 27



Winning streak: Cliff Lazarenko, the white-shirted hero of darts' heyday, enjoys a return to form on the oche at the PDC World Championship yesterday

Peter Jay

## Big Cliff's resurrection shuffle leaves Circus in carnival mood

THE ATMOSPHERE at the Circus Tavern when the darts players are in town is an assault on the senses. You can see it, taste it and smell it, thanks to the combined efforts of a couple of smoke machines and several hundred dedicated punters. Your eardrums bulge when someone hits a big check-out. And when you shift your feet on the Tavern carpet, there is a faint stickiness, the legacy of a thousand spilled lager-and-blacks.

There is nothing in sport quite like it, especially when a legend of the game is about to make his way the oche. There are not many of them left, the men who were household names in the late 1970s and 80s, a time when small children would write to Jimmy Saville claiming that their greatest wish in life was to meet Eric Bristow. The fortunes of people such as Jocky Wilson, Bobby George and the Crafty Cockney himself have tended to mirror those of darts as a whole. Bristow, for one, was embarrassingly poor as he lost every leg of his first-round match in the

Lazarenko's Lazarus act is proving the main draw at darts' world championship, where the beer flows and the arrows fly true. By Greg Wood in Purfleet

PDC World Championship on Monday night.

One man, though, has been rolling back the years this week, and the fans were queuing from mid-morning yesterday to see him. It is 23 years since "Big" Cliff Lazarenko walked off a building site and into the uncertain life of a professional darts player. Even in a sport with little time for weight-watching, his nickname came naturally. Lazarenko is big in the same way that water is wet, and just in case anyone is in any doubt, there is the trademark white shirt, which does nothing to flatter his figure. He was the wrong side of 20 stone even then. These days, if anything, he is even heavier.

Lazarenko never had the killer instinct of Bristow, or the wild streak of Wilson, but he never kept his feelings in either and the fans still love him for it.

He was an 11-4 chance before his match with Steve Brown yesterday, which in a two-horse race is almost no-hoper territory. For the hundreds sweating in the Circus pea-souper, though, he was the main man, and they stamped, yelled and sang their approval for every ton or winning double.

Big Cliff soaked it up, and then started to give it back. The first leg of the match went to Brown, but then Lazarenko took three in a row and with them the first set. Ten minutes later, as he claimed the second set too, he tried a little dance. It turned out to be more of a wobble, but the crowd knew what he meant and the roars grew louder still.

For Brown, it was all too much. His shots at doubles were drifting into adjacent beds, while Lazarenko's arrowed their way to the cen-

tre of their target. With three of the next four legs, Big Cliff was into the quarter-finals, and the player and his army of followers punched the air as one. He is still among the outsiders to win this, the first of two so-called world championships which will be played out over the next two weeks. Phil Taylor, the winner at the Circus Tavern for the last four years, is as close to unbeatable as any darts player has ever been, and would start as hot favourite for the rival championship, the Embassy at Frimley Green, where he is eligible to play. In its present fractured state, though, Lazarenko's sudden rejuvenation could be just what darts needs.

"A while back I was going through the motions," he said afterwards. "I even put the darts away for two or three months, but then one night I

decided to go upstairs and practise. I've gone back to the nitty-gritty, to the way I was. I'm being a bit raw."

And putting on a show, keeping the punters happy. "The PR people might say that the Big Cliff white shirt is old hat," he said, "but if I walked out in full blue, they wouldn't be able to relate to me. I still remember where I came from. I know how it feels if you're not up there playing, so if I can give something back of the feeling I get from being on stage, why the hell not? I love this game, and it has deteriorated for long enough. It's time now for it to grow again."

Darts will never again grip the public consciousness like it did 20 years ago. Even when all things 1970s were briefly fashionable again recently, darts was not invited to the party. Yet when Big Cliff goes to the oche once more tomorrow night, the thoughts and hopes of thirty-somethings everywhere will go with him.

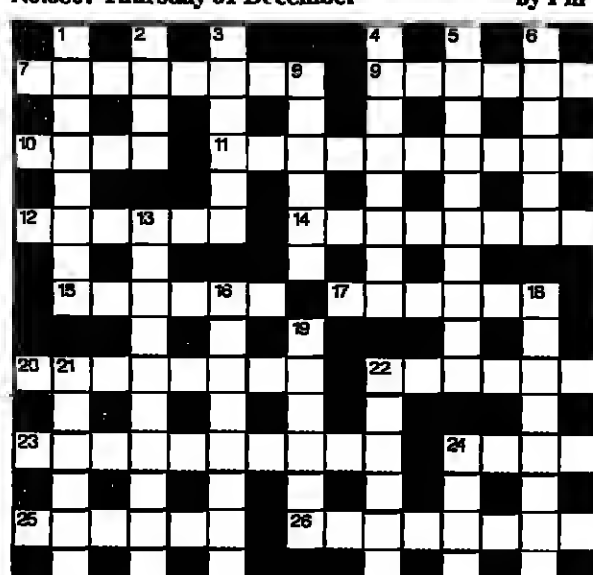
As the man himself put it yesterday: "The big fella is playing well. End of story."

Results, Digest, page 27

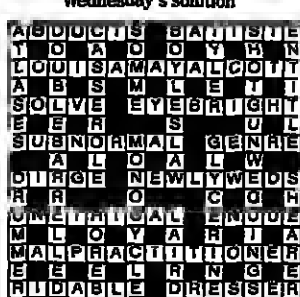
### THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3807 Thursday 31 December

by Phi



Wednesday's solution



#### ACROSS

- 7 Pupil taking in convict for protection (6)
- 9 Collection of tablets slates Dicky (6)
- 10 Bars much-hyped bridge partners (4)
- 11 Sailor Bill embraced by brothel-keeper? It's what goes on over the way! (10)
- 12 Tell otherwise if leading to conclusion of testimony (6)
- 14 I obtain one sneakily from the outset (2,6)
- 15 Tempt one learning trade to ignore first four items (6)
- 17 Gives a meaning to numberless challenges (6)
- 20 Rather than greeting give

#### DOWN

- 1 Plant responding to sun - no result in a storm (8)
- 2 Crucial crosswords finally give solutions (4)
- 3 Some primitive art (hyserically crude) (6)
- 4 Convert that is clutching
- 5 decorated missal (8)
- 6 Taking pessimistic view of time-saving possibly (10)
- 8 Note about a regulation in African nation (6)
- 9 A piano's inferior to noble feature of organ (6)
- 13 Be trander, unconventional - choose an exotic mate (10)
- 16 Meet company with sort of knowledge not generally available, we hear (8)
- 18 Fish in flustered dive swallowed by marine creature (3-5)
- 19 Opera hat? (6)
- 21 An accomplished old disrupter of governments (6)
- 22 Funny man, a good one, into mockery (6)
- 24 Some made a fortune ignoring the words of others (4)



# THURSDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

Anadyr in Russia's frozen far north is the last place on earth that you'd choose to see in the new year. But, by a cruel twist of geography, it'll be the first to greet the new millennium. Wrap up and get down for the coldest party of the year...



Otto Pohl

## Of all the places in all the world, the century had to pick this one

**T**his is where Time Present meets Time Past. A few score miles to the east, across the frozen Bering Sea, lies the International Dateline, the United States and yesterday. Head west across the tundra, and you also traverse back in time through the 24-hour-sized segments that girdle the planet. There is no later hour than here: this is the first time zone, one of its heat-centre parts. It is here, in Russia's far north-east, that in one year's time this millennium will quietly slide on. The next. Long before the citizens of London, Paris and New York have gathered to toast the first few seconds of the New Age, it will have dawned here on a world which, though permanently ahead of the clock, is heading backwards.

Welcome to Chukotka, the meeting point between Asia and the West, a region the size of France but which now has a smaller population than Reading. Welcome, to be more precise, to Anadyr, the regional centre where we have arrived as guests of the governor at the start of a four-day odyssey over the Arctic lands which he seeks to rule.

When, on 1 January, 2000, the sun finally drags itself above the horizon for a few sallow hours, it will illuminate these wide streets of ice, these dreary apartment blocks, shacks on stilts, and empty steel containers (testimony to the steady depopulation). In Fiji, New Zealand or Vanuatu, which share its time zone, the next century's first view of the world will surely be idyllic – but not here.

It is Saturday, but we are wondering where most of Friday went. On Thursday evening we boarded our charter plane in Moscow – nine hours' flying time and nine time zones away – and late Friday

night we disembarked. Our party comprises about a dozen Moscow-based journalists and a blonde, mink-wrapped Moscow TV star called Aida Nevskaya, who seems to spend her time scouring the empty landscape in search of fans, and who – bafflingly – has brought her sunglasses with her. Some of the group say they caught a glimpse of the day through the plane window, a red rag of light waved briefly at us from the horizon. But most of Friday was lost.

So Saturday it is. Today our host, the governor, a stout and energetic man called Alexander Nazarov, summons us to tell us about Chukotka's economic prospects and problems. We are here because he is keen to attract international investment in the gold industry, as his semi-autonomous region has the second-largest reserves in Russia. He also reveals that he is planning to erect an international hotel in Anadyr, where the world's media can stay when they arrive to cover the opening of the millennium (the BBC is already expressing interest).

Later, he tells me that he has "big plans" for the special day. "We will set the tone for the new millennium," he declares. He doesn't, however, give any details.

Certainly, the new hotel is a good idea. The current one is a run-down Soviet affair where the governor's enthusiasm for the new millennium is not shared by the staff. "We aren't interested," says Tanya Simkuchova, 41, an administrator. "We have more important worries." Like, for example, wages: she hasn't been paid for four months.

Anadyr also needs a new restaurant. There are only two in town, one of which is a gloomy little dive that calls itself a pizza house. Here I am given a bun, with reindeer meat hurried in it. Everyone eats reindeer here, even for breakfast (it costs just over a

dollar a kilo). The residents hang plastic bags of it out of their apartment windows. In these temperatures, there's no need for a freezer.

Max, a client of the pizza house, looks like a reindeer-eater. He is a human tank with a tundra-like, quarter-inch haircut whose drink-fuelled desire to speak English far outweighs the minor inconvenience that he doesn't know any. But it is clear that the young man is not happy. "We – have – big – girls," he says, gesturing at a table of women. Why, he asks – switching to Russian – won't we dance with them? So this, we can assume, is what New Year's Eve

BY PHIL REEVES

1999 will look like in Anadyr. At the end of the room, a solemn-faced man dressed like a Sixties Butlins redcoat is playing the "Macarena" on electric guitar. Soon the big girls are dancing hard, their feet thumping the worn floorboards.

**SUNDAY:** We set off in a 14-year-old Soviet AN-24 propeller plane north for Igarka – an old Gulag town – and then on by a battered Mi-8 helicopter to Konevka, a hamlet of 700 people mostly occupied by Chukchis.

History has been unkind to the Chukchis, the region's largest non-Russian ethnic group. For centuries, they lived on the tundra, subsisting on reindeer herding and hunting whale and walrus, while Russians, Americans, Britons and other adventurers swept in and out in search of furs and gold. But the Soviets decided to collectivise their herds (a task that they were still struggling to accomplish by the Fifties) and put their children into boarding schools to force-feed them with Moscow's ideolo-

gy. Severed from their roots and traditions, the Chukchis fell victim to drink and social despair. They are now a favourite butt of Russian jokes – like the Belgians to the French.

There will be no pre-millennium tension here; no fretting about which frock to wear, or which party to go to. Here, like Anadyr, there are more pressing matters, such as survival. Any Chukchi born today is not likely to make it beyond four decades or so: average life expectancy has fallen to between 40 and 45. For most adults here, their experience of the next millennium is likely to be fairly brief.

**MONDAY:** It is beyond comprehension that anyone should live in a place as cold as this. The low hills and forests of central Chukotka are cloaked in a grey haze of deep, deep refrigeration. It is like glimpsing the Ice Age. At minus 49 Celsius, the air is so cold that it scalds the lungs.

A rouble banknote held between the fingers turns brittle in seconds. A half-eaten Mars bar turns so hard you can cut yourself with it. Touch a metal door handle without gloves, and you hit the pain zone where the fingertips cannot tell if they have been burnt or frozen.

We have flown west to Bilbino, 60 miles north of the Arctic Circle. The 11,000 residents (half the town's Soviet-era population) have various means of keeping warm – we meet one woman wandering around clutching a hot water bottle under her fur coat – but the main source of heat comes from a big concrete atomic power station a few miles out of town.

You might think that Bilbino's residents are none too happy about living on top of a nuclear station. Far from it. They like the plant. It guarantees them heat and light, treasured services in an ice-world

where nothing else is certain. "You get used to it," says Ludmila Dubina, a school librarian, who has lived here 23 years. "It is better to live near an atomic station, and have heat, than not to have any."

Vladimir Bolko, the local police chief, was living in Ukraine, his native republic, when Chernobyl blew up in 1986; yet he, too, has nothing bad to say about the power station. "What do I care? At least we're warm," he grins. And that's true: Bilbino almost seems to revel in its round-the-clock heating: in the foyer of the sports centre, there are lemon trees growing in pots.

The governor is keen to show off his nuclear plant, so we drive there across the ice roads in Jeeps, their interiors lined with thick carpet to keep out the cold. Within, it is smart, bright, clean and busy. The conference room, where the acting director meets us to explain how his plant abides by international safety standards, is adorned with plaques proclaiming its excellence. These would have been more reassuring if several cameramen had not managed to get into the reactor area, unescorted and unprotected, while the governor's party and the staff gathered to toast each other with cognac.

The governor and his crew know they can get out of here. Vladimir Vodolazki, 54, duty officer in the station's control room, moved to Bilbino 20 years ago, and cannot afford to leave. "I came here as a young romantic, and ended up a prisoner," he remarks. A prisoner trapped in an Arctic nuclear power station, thousands of miles from anywhere. You can hardly make a worse start to the new millennium than that.

**TUESDAY:** You need to drink to keep warm, to keep your spirits up in this twilight world. I entirely

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## Beware the euro

Sir: On the eve of European monetary union, I am held by a terrible fear. Many newspapers have reported that a monetary union on mainland Europe would create an economic force supported by 270 million people or so to rival the United States. This is the critical part of this whole terrifying affair.

The economic force of the euro will be such that, should it succeed, it will create a fragile world market, based around two major currencies and building trading rivalries between Europe and the USA. This is not only dangerous for world economic stability, but bears striking similarities to a proto-Orwellian world political situation. Smaller nations will be squeezed tighter and tighter and forced to compete more and more for their share of the market. This will naturally encourage collectivisation of economies elsewhere in the world on the lines of the European model, for example in Africa and South-East Asia, where security would surely be found in size.

Should the euro fail, on the other hand, then there would follow a period of austerity in European economies and the world markets as national monetary systems restarted. Either way, it cannot be beneficial to anyone either in the union or outside it.

Therefore, I implore the Government and the people of Britain, indeed the free world, to oppose this dreadful, sinister agglomeration of states.  
ALEX LEE  
Worcester

Sir: You seem to be taking the information for your articles on the launch of the euro straight from the EU Commission's (dis)information newsletters ('Countdown to the euro, 29 December').

You assert that governments have actually created public opinion against the euro. In the richer countries, it is not necessary to create anti-euro feelings. There can hardly be a more pro-European government than that of Germany. The German public was exposed to a deluge of pro-European propaganda; there is no credible political opposition to the euro in Germany. Yet, the public remained for a significant part anti-euro. The public (not only in Germany) trust the Deutschmark and don't see why it should be taken away.

Your article about the euro and France focuses on the euro-education of the young. Yet, whilst French public opinion is just about in favour of the single currency, the majority of the young (aged 16-25) actually oppose the abolition of the franc.

That those countries with weak currencies are in favour of the euro and those with stable currencies (such as Britain and Germany) are against. The true function of the euro appears to be that of development aid for the poorer EU member states.  
TOBIAS SCHUMACHER  
Brussels

Sir: In reply to Austin Spreadbury (letter, 29 December), may I ask two questions?

Could the Eurosceptics explain why a single currency would not expose companies and economies to the market forces they support?

And why is it that our continental cousins, so burdened with the yoke of Brussels, still manage to be more productive and better educated and enjoy a higher living standard than we do?

The Eurosceptics, it would appear, prefer to use the Channel to hide poor education, lack of investment and appalling productivity rather than face the chill winds of Teutonic efficiency. History has some pity comments on those who try to disguise their weaknesses with a veneer of nationalism.  
JONATHAN DUMBELL  
London E15

Sir: If multi-ethnic states are "the future" (letter, 23 December) I sure

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Panto Season No 4: The musical director, Paul McClure, instructs the chorus in 'Dick Whittington' at the Northcott Theatre, Exeter

John Voos

wish someone would explain that to the ex-Yugoslavs, or for that matter to the Russians and Chechens.  
MICHAEL W STONE  
Peterborough

## Caging Saddam

Sir: I am puzzled by Andreas Whittam Smith's article "Nothing has felt quite right about the attacks on Iraq" (21 December). There must have been innocents among those who were bombed at Hamburg, Dresden, Cologne, Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Perhaps we shouldn't have gone to war in 1939. Perhaps we should have taken the view that hundreds of thousands of innocents would die in the liberation of Europe, as they did, and that cost would be too high.

What does not "feel right" is not the attacks on Iraq but the pusillanimous reaction to American and British efforts to reduce its capacity to act aggressively. Or do we have to wait for a biological-chemical attack on Kuwait or Tel Aviv (which would really set off a regional fireball) for the rest of the world to take notice?  
JD NORMAN  
London N12

Sir: Since 1945 the declared aim of the international community has been to secure peace by means of a system of collective security, operated through the United Nations, by which any rogue nation will be controlled, firstly by sanctions and secondly by force.

Why is there such opposition to bombing operations against Iraq? Saddam is a monster. If he confined his excesses to his own population, then it would be difficult to justify action against him. He does not, but has attacked his neighbours, using germ warfare against them, and is clearly intent on continuing to develop such weapons and their means of delivery. Not to take action means awaiting the day when Iraq emerges as a fully fledged nuclear power.

If sanctions and air attacks are not acceptable, because of the

inevitable suffering of civilian populations, then it would seem that there is no means by which a system of collective security can be enforced. The problem of Iraq is the acid test for the post-war foreign policy consensus, such as it is. There seems to be no replacement in sight.  
D SHOSKINS  
Edinburgh

Sir: The cat-and-mouse tactics of Saddam Hussein with the UN weapons inspection teams has led, seemingly inevitably, to the recent air attacks. But would it not have been a far better policy to have left Iraq free of sanctions and inspections and to have set up a defence pact with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States so that any attack upon any of them by Iraq would have called for a united response?

The Iraqi people would have been spared much hardship and the opposition forces within Iraq could have been more effective. As it is the Iraqis have suffered from the West and have been encouraged to rally round the despot. The possibility of a policy of

rapprochement with Iraq's neighbours and the Muslim world has been lost.  
JOHN MERCER  
Sidcup, Kent

## Software option

Sir: Andrew Warren's letter (21 December) is composed around a few standard claims from Microsoft that are usually collectively called FUD - Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt.

Mission-critical applications are today running on open source software. It is not something that will or won't happen in the future. Open source software is based on standards, unlike Windows, which always tries to change, the standards to conform to their products instead of the other way around.

Windows does not integrate well with existing products. Unix, however, in all its forms, is readily able to serve files and programs to Windows and to read Windows file systems. And it does so by the open source system called Samba. "Wider acceptance" has so far

meant to me that I have been forced to use Windows software. I do so when I am paid for it. At home I use software that is based on standards, integrates well with my existing applications, supports all family members and never crashes. I have the Usenet for support; what it gives me is far, far superior to any phone support from any commercial supplier.  
BJORN STEENSRUD  
Oslo

## Church of Mammon

Sir: Spending Christmas with close relatives in London, we decided to visit St Paul's Cathedral on Boxing Day. Many others had decided to do likewise, a large number of whom were tourists.

We were amazed to discover that an admission charge of £4 per person had to be paid before access to the cathedral was allowed. Our intention had been to spend a short period in this wonderful building at an appropriate time. We came away disgusted at the cynical and hypocritical attitude of those who

contrive to make money in this way. We noticed that the tourists looked puzzled but paid up. One British family, not realising that money was necessary, started to walk past the barriers but were called back to pay. They also left.

We have, on many occasions, entered cathedrals here and abroad and given willingly and generously towards upkeep. Why have compulsory payment in any church or cathedral? Surely this goes against all that the church teaches. Is St Paul's now alongside public monuments, museums, theme parks and places of entertainment in vying for our cash?  
MRS ALWYN DEAN  
Leicester

## Time for change

Sir: As we enter 1999, the issue of Britain's participation in European monetary union is still in the headlines. Yet before such a decision is made, isn't it time we had British monetary union?

Those presenting Scottish banknotes often find they get suspicious glances in England. However, one evening as I was returning from a trip to Northern Ireland, I found myself unable to spend Northern Irish (sterling) notes at Victoria Station. Neither the ticket office nor a succession of snack bars wanted to take the cash. I was told that they could take Scottish notes, but that Ulster money was "too foreign."

Eventually, in a state of despair, I headed for the bureau de change. I explained that the money I had was "too foreign" for me to use and asked if they could change it into some Bank of England notes for me. However, I was told that, as it was British money, they wouldn't change it for me. I would have to wait until the following morning and change it in a bank. Clearly the money was "not foreign enough".

Is joining the euro the only way to eliminate these "little local difficulties"?  
SAMUEL BEST-SHAW  
West Malling, Kent

anyone else I have ever met. He created the Samaritans, who have saved countless lives and offered hope to anyone needing it. The movement went on to become world-wide in one form or another. I suggest not a statue - we have too many in London. Let there be a giant telephone of the kind we used when he launched the Samaritans in 1953. It should be carved in stone.  
MR LESLIE JERMAN  
Theydon Bois, Essex

Sir: Who could fill the empty plinth better than that greatest of Londoners, the "man for all seasons", and the "person of greatest virtue this kingdom has ever produced"?  
Thomas More?  
LORNA ARNOLD  
Oxford

## IN BRIEF

expected" to become Paymaster General despite objections from me ("Cunningham tries to stop the feuding", 29 December). I have made no such objections and would never stand in the way of the promotion of a highly talented minister. Promotions are for the Prime Minister alone and he will complete any ministerial changes after the end of the Christmas break.  
Lord IRVINE OF LAIRG  
Lord Chancellor  
House of Lords  
London SW1

Sir: Let us fill the empty plinth in Trafalgar Square with a tribute to Chad Varah, who has done more for humanity than

Sir: Is it not time this government did something constructive for the approaching millennium? What about rationalising our bank holidays? Locating Easter is a mystery to most people, no one knows for sure when Jesus was born and most of our present bank holidays occur between 25 December and Whitson. I suggest moving Christmas to the end of December so that the period from 30 December to 1 January becomes a three-day holiday. I further suggest creating a three-day holiday at the end of June and a one-day holiday at each equinox.  
EMRYS TURNER  
Appledore, Devon

Sir: Paul Waugh reports that Geoff Hoon is "widely

## Here is the news forecast for the remainder of the century

YESTERDAY WE brought you a forecast of the main events of the first half of 1999 and today we complete our look at the year ahead.

**July**  
Extraordinary development in Pinchoet extradition case. One of the law lords is said to be against "killing" and therefore likely to be biased. Whole case starts again.

Millennium Bug is cloned in laboratory conditions.  
Favourite for the Booker Prize is a novel written by an Albanian woman, set in Karachi, telling the deeply ironic story of a four-foot high man whose ambition is to be known as the next Merchant/Ivory.

England struggle in Second Test.  
Bill Clinton is found guilty of perjury, embezzlement and criminal

snogging by Congress. His personal ratings reach an all-time high.  
Hottest July on record. Global cooling blamed.

**August**  
Solar eclipse in Cornwall. Not many dead.

Scientists think they may have found cure for cancer.  
England struggle in Fourth Test.

After six months as Britain's film censor, Andreas Whittam-Smith decides to go solo and form his own Independent Board of Film Control. Geneticists think they may have isolated the gene which causes the urge to alter things genetically. Richard Branson's attempt to drive first train round the world comes to grief when the 17.32 from Euston to Birmingham New Street sinks in the Bering Straits.

Hottest August on record. Solar eclipse blamed.

**September**  
Scientists think they have found a cure for laddishness.  
After Clinton is forced to resign in disgrace as US President, his ratings hit an all-time high.

Tony Blair starts second month of his holiday in Tuscany. Scientists claim to have grown a human hand on the Millennium Bug.

After initial success, Andreas Whittam-Smith's Independent Film Board hits trouble and is taken over by Mirror Newspapers. England struggle in Seventh Test.

Outbreak of new football season. League champions lose opening fixture. Manager says: "These are

giving their all. I shall demand 100 per cent commitment. This has been a recorded interview. That will be £250, please."

September is the most average month on record. Global mediocrity blamed.

**October**  
First Christmas decorations spotted in Oxford Street.

President Al Gore fails to make mark as new president, as everyone is still obeying ousted ex-president Clinton, who draws enormous crowds everywhere.

As Tony Blair starts the third month of his Tuscan holiday, it turns out he has been trying to get home for six weeks, but has no euros to pay his fare.

Millennium Bug escapes from laboratory, starts cloning itself and

terrorising the countryside. Scientists think it may have contracted Mad Bug Disease.

Darkness, dampness, dankness and despondency. Global pessimism blamed.

**November**  
Massive last-minute rush for millennium holidays in Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim and other countries which don't use Christian calendar.

Disco disaster in East London. All music systems fail in popular club and crowds run amok. A coded call from the Millennium Bug claims responsibility.

England struggle in 19th Test. Irish money rescues Independent Film Board.

First scheduled London-to-Midlands balloon service disrupted by adverse winds. Richard Branson

promises to get everyone home from Paris by Christmas.

Chilly November. Global chilliness blamed.

**December**  
Bill Gates in face-to-face talks with Millennium Bug. He comes back claiming victory but speaking oddly. Experts think he now has the Millennium Bug in his system.

Ex-President Clinton seizes power in USA and calls for fresh elections, claiming that he is free to stand again as he never completed his second term.

General Pinchoet disappears mysteriously. Experts say that this is poetic justice.

At midnight on 31 December 1999 everything collapses in chaos except Virgin Trains, which start running smoothly on time.

## Of all the places in all the world...

Continued from page 1  
accept that. The climate here is so hostile that its own football team, Spartak-Chukotka - the governor's pride and joy - is based 5,000 miles away in Moscow for most of the year. But vodka for breakfast? To be fair, there was a choice. Bottles of wine and beer also stood on the table. Requests for soft drinks brought puzzled looks from the restaurant waiters.

In the back of Russia's beyond, they seem to drink even harder than they do in Moscow. As we fly around the emptiness of the Arctic in our propeller plane, like the court of a minor medieval potentate, the governor's band of dishevelled aides crack open bottles of cognac and vodka and gobble down chunks of frozen wild goose meat and sausage. Yesterday, several were so drunk that they could barely get off the plane. The governor himself remains restrained, pondering the mighty issues that face him.

This morning we board the AN-24 and fly to Pevek, a port and mining town built on the edge of the Arctic Ocean six decades ago by prisoners at the height of Stalin's fanatical attempts to colonise the north. Thousands of people died in the process.

It is minus 33 Celsius, but there is a brisk wind coming in from the frozen sea that makes it seem even colder than Bilibino. We are walking along the front when an old woman approaches my colleague, Will Englund from the *Baltimore Sun*. "Cover your nose quickly!" she says. We notice that, although we have only been outside for a few minutes, the tip of his nose has gone bright white, the first sign of frostbite.

Every story here is a sad one. A group of municipal workers have been on hunger strike for a fortnight because they haven't been paid for three and a half years. "This town is quietly dying," says Alla Yevstigneyeva, 59, the manager of a local grocery store. "It is an irreversible process."

And dying it surely is; the population of the surrounding area has fallen from 34,500 in 1991 to 12,500 today, mirroring a fall that has seen Chukotka's population shrivel to 90,000, half the size of a few years ago. The Soviets - Russians, Ukrainians, Belarussians - are steadily moving out, abandoning the landscape again to the Chukchis and reindeer and wolves. But leaving is costly. Like everywhere, Mrs Yevstigneyeva also wants to head for the real, light, normal world... If only she could afford a flat somewhere else.

Ten years ago, when he first arrived, this town was fun, says Dr Alexander Maslov. Like everyone, he was lured north by the promise of higher pay. At 32, he is now chief doctor at the Pevek hospital. A few years back, he earned the rouble equivalent of \$1,000 a month, and had a big apartment. The streets teemed with life on holidays. No more. His salary - delayed for months these days, like everyone else's - is worth a fifth of what it once was. "What's happening is very hard to bear," he says.

So hard that some people seem to be on the edge, grappling with total breakdown. When we go to a bar, a middle-aged woman with bright peroxide hair gives us - by way of a gesture of hospitality - a plate of sliced lemons to eat. We return the compliment by buying her a bottle of Russian champagne.

A conversation starts, but within a few moments her mood changes from calm urbanity to tears and anger. "God has forgotten this place!" she bellows, trembling. "We gave everything to the Motherland! But we have nothing now!"

We leave, embarrassed, uneasy, eager now to end this odyssey of the Arctic, unable to offer any suggestion, any hope that would help her, or the rest of this abandoned place, to weather the first years of the new millennium.

Happy New Year, Chukotka. And - when it dawns - may the next century be far, far better than the last.



**MILES KINGTON**  
Bill Clinton is found guilty of perjury, embezzlement and criminal snogging

early days. We can still pick ourselves up off the floor. There were a lot of players out there today not

ROYAL...  
THE...  
SATURDAY...  
THINGS WE DO...  
THE WEIR...  
WEST SIDE...  
WHISTLE DO...  
The Independent 31 December 1998



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## Not much honour in a gong fashioned for another age

THE NEW Year's honours list is a hardy perennial. Every year it brings forth the same sparse crop of civil servants and "the great and the good", accompanied by a sprinkling of entertainers and sports personalities.

Many of the individuals honoured have indeed done "good works", as well as entertained us. Only a very few hard-hearted citizens will begrudge honouring the acting of Nigel Hawthorne, awarded a knighthood; Lenny Henry, now CBE, has worked hard for Comic Relief as well as making millions laugh. Sporting achievement, whether of the cricketer Angus Fraser or the heptathlete Denise Lewis, is also recognised.

But that very lack of controversy marks the flaw in this system. We all recognise the achievements of such people: they are feted in the press, and by the public, at the appropriate time of their success. The adulation of crowds and audiences is their life blood, and no amount of official approval makes any difference. The public know greatness when they see it: they do not require prompting to acknowledge it.

It is often those who have passed their best, whose dangerous satirical and artistic edge has been hunted and who have been absorbed into the Establishment, who are honoured. It will be to do them little good. Those same satirists have done much to create a meritocratic society, in which many of those honoured have stopped using the letters after their name in everyday life: they are aware of how pompous they would seem if they did.

It is the same with politicians, even though the hope of peace in Northern Ireland has prompted many of the awards. There is again no question that the men and women involved in the peace process have shown political bravery, stamina and commitment. Two men from the New World, in particular, came to the aid of the Old: General John de Chastelain and Senator George Mitchell, chairmen of the talks that led to the Good Friday agreement. They gave up their time and energies entirely voluntarily, and deserve our thanks. But they already had our gratitude before they had letters after their names.

"Ordinary people" - nurses, midwives, policemen - are also recognised today. The honours system, as reformed by John Major when he was prime minister, has made strides in this direction. But New Labour's failure to change it radically is a sign that the whole idea has become obsolete. The mantra of "modernisation", repeated so often, does not seem to extend to this list, grey and uninspiring beyond the facade of celebrity.

There are exceptions. John Major deserves an important share of the praise that has been raining down on Tony Blair, David Trimble and John Hume. He took the risk, with little encouragement from many in his own party,



of engaging with republicans and nationalists. It was his talks process that eventually succeeded. France and the US have the Légion d'honneur and the Congressional Medal of Honour for people who rise so far above what is expected of them. If we reserved honours for such outstanding examples, they would mean more.

Such a system would end the bore of bestowing honours on civil servants. Even though their automatic right to such recognition has been abolished, such a practice has no place in a society no longer willing to accept that the man in Whitehall knows best. In no other field is professional advancement further rewarded with the recognition of the state: why should civil servants be different?

Very few people appear to think this list means anything beyond anachronism, designed as it was for an age when the Court stood at the apex of a rigid social order. When the Government kicks away one of the props of that social order, the hereditary House of Lords, it would do well to reshape the honours system as well.

## Can it be right to risk your life for sport?

DISASTER IN the pursuit of sporting success prompts an obvious question: why do people take such risks? The loss of Glyn Charles in the Sydney-to-Hobart yacht race and the death of climbers in the Scottish mountains have combined to bring this question to the fore, for such tragedies are not uncommon. Sportsmen and women are injured all the time, even after their careers have come to a close: the American sprinter Florence Griffith-Joiner paid the ultimate price for her peak fitness just months ago.

If, of course, the case that all sports should be conducted with the maximum concern for the wellbeing of the participants. Meteorologists had warned of storm-force winds when the yacht left Sydney. The avalanche warning in the Scottish Highlands had reached three on

a scale of one-to-five before the trainee climbers were taken up above the snow-line. Questions will have to be asked as to whether every precaution was taken.

But, cosseted in our comfortable lives, we recoil from the idea of danger rather more instinctively than logical inquiry suggests. We should remember the dangers we take every day. Thousands of people die on British roads every year. The very act of driving, cycling, or taking the train to work is far more likely to be deadly than the sports we perceive as "dangerous".

And we cannot ignore the fact that some people enjoy danger, and only feel alive when they can sense the peril they are in. Quality of life can supplant length of life for many. We should celebrate such people, and their brave lives which make our existence all the richer, rather than refuse to understand them. In many fields true greatness, sporting or otherwise, can only be attained under the threat of danger: such people have every right to take risks with their own bodies - and their own lives.

# Bands gotta split, politicians gotta plot - can anyone tell me why?

ON MONDAY, idly flicking on to Ceefax, was alarmed to discover that Boyzone - the all-male singing and peccol-display band - were thinking of splitting up. Alarmed, because this would constitute irrational and self-destructive behaviour. Only one member of Boyzone - the blond, soft-eyed Ronan Keating - has any individual profile whatsoever; the rest are just abs on legs. As long as they stick together they are - for the moment - chart-toppers (or whatever you call it these days). Otherwise - ta-ta.

Ceefax could, of course have got it wrong. Having recently spotted headlines such as "Jailed immigrant faces deportation" (Ah, the old book on the head routine, I presume) and "Dutch drugs horde seized" (What? Including their horses?), I no longer quite believe everything I read on television. But there was something about the story that rang true. It's a matter of raging ego; bands gotta split - no matter how silly this may seem. And politicians gotta plot, even if there isn't much to plot about.

So, as the Prime Minister's New Year message of tough times ahead, waited to us on the soft Indian Ocean breezes from the Seychelles, some of his colleagues (or their minions) were letting it be known that the days of Tony Blair were numbered, and that they were very much going to be listened to in 1999, thank you very much. Various, there would be curbs on spinning, less lovey-dovey stuff with the Lib Dems and - most important of all - a return to more "traditional Labour values", as backbencher Andrew Mackinlay put it in this news-

paper yesterday. Those supposedly endorsing such a stance were said to be Jack Straw, David Blunkett, Gordon Brown and John Prescott.

On the day that Peter Mandelson and Geoffrey Robinson did their double-resignation act, all of us pundits queued up to say how the Government had been damaged, without really specifying what that damage was. It was possible that key middle-class voters would become suddenly disillusioned with Labour and return to the Tory fold. But what we rather sensed was that the Mandelson departure would knock some of the stuffing out of Blair, and diminish the leader's authority among his barons. Simultaneously nervous and emboldened, they might begin to bite on their harnesses. They are, after all, grand men and women now.

It seems odd today - after a decade of Tory infighting and of Kinnockian discipline - to recall that Labour was traditionally the party of mutual loathing. The Left has always draped its personal feuds and competing ambitions in the scarlet veil of ideological and political difference. The old joke about the two Trotskyist sects, who meet for a Unity conference and split into six, was substantially true. Certainly, whenever I feel sad I turn to the websites dealing with the catastrophic implosion of Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party, and all my problems fall into perspective. Another reminder is Ken Livingstone's exuberant and constant disloyalty to his party leadership, which - happily - adorns this newspaper week after week.



DAVID AARONOVITCH  
Tony Blair is not a tribalist. That is what distinguishes him from so many of his Labour colleagues

The trouble is that there is precious little ground for the kind of political division that we have seen in the past. Not much veil, if you like. The economic programme of the Government, for instance, is Gordon Brown's. He is the one who has balanced the demands of prudence and enhanced expenditure on social programmes. So when there is talk of a return to Keynesianism, does that imply a revolt by the Chancellor against his own policies, or merely a way of dressing up existing and agreed priorities?

Is there somewhere a taste within the Cabinet for other old Labour varieties, such as a massive extension of public ownership? I thought not. Or how about a redistribution of national wealth using, principally, income tax? Most of the putative plotters are probably happier with the Brown method

of stealthily taxing the middle classes in ways that they do not notice, nor attempt to avoid. The cause of egalitarianism is best served, they would all agree, through vast improvements in education and training. I hear few influential voices raised against Dobson's NHS, Straw's Home Office, devolution, House of Lords reform, the Good Friday Agreement or any of the substantial policies of the Government. Or indeed, even the presentation of those policies.

Which leaves us with those other, more atavistic, anxieties concerning changes to the voting system and the realignment of British politics. One of the themes of the last part of 1998 has been a desperate attempt to discover an ideology to explain today's world, and to help mobilise different armies for its change. Intellectuals such as Will Hutton have called for a more overtly social-democratic and interventionist stance, while equally clever people, such as Michael Ignatieff, have espoused a contrary liberalism. Between them they have embarked upon an attempt to persuade us that we can be one thing or the other - but not both.

Neither of them convinces me. I am not at all sure, were you to put them in separate small rooms and invite them each to write an election manifesto in human-being language, that you would be able to tell which was which. The truth, I think, is that, for the left-of-centre there is no catch-all ideology on offer. What we have instead is a pick'n'mix progressivism, which broadly agrees on the need to modernise the state and to devolve

decisions, desires government to be more open and more ethical, that believes an objective of government policy should be to ensure that citizens do not get left behind, that abhors discrimination and that believes that human beings are social animals. Now, this is not a "position", it is a continuum, along which many of us are to be found (though we may shift along it from time to time). The "Third Way" is simply an attempt to find a name for this continuum.

This is bad news for those who prefer the security of a tribe. There are many in politics who are natural joiners, part of whose self-definition comes in being able to say who they are not: that they are with the lot who put bones through their noses, and that they are against the rabble from the east valley who wear penis-gourds. Never mind that they all worship the same gods and eat the same monkeys.

Tony Blair is not a tribalist. That is what distinguishes him from so many of his Labour colleagues. He does not believe in the mystical superiority of his team over the other lot, and I think that is why he now leans, intellectually, towards electoral reform. It is also what the voters (quite rightly) like about him. Never mind all the grinding and hip-thrusting of the others, Tony Blair is to Labour what the winsome Ronan Keating is to Boyzone. And insofar as what the other band members have to offer is different to what Ronan has, the fans don't want it. Which is why, consulting Ceefax just now, I see that Boyzone have just denied rumours of a split.

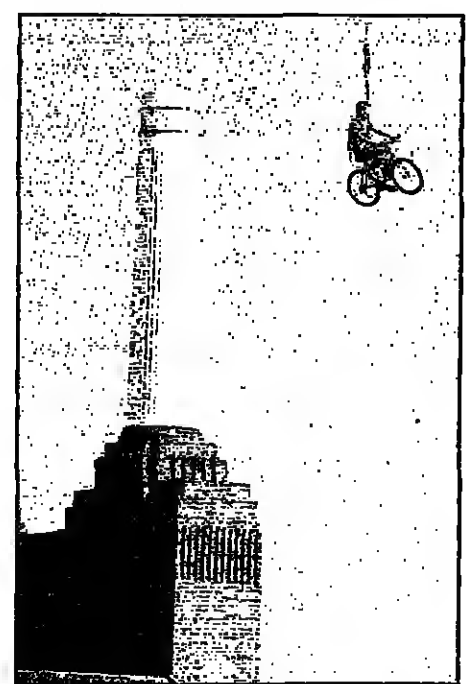
## QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The sea has such extraordinary moods that sometimes you feel this is the only sort of life - and 10 minutes later you're praying for death."  
The Duke of Edinburgh

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Never mistake motion for action."  
Ernest Hemingway,  
American novelist

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Bungee Jump by Kalpesh Lathigra  
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## MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD  
British and Australian comment on  
the English team's Test victory

IN MELBOURNE, some were hailing England's triumph as a miracle. That seems to us something of a slight on the magnificent performance of the Kent fast bowler Dean Headley. With the fifth Test still to start in Sydney this weekend, England could yet draw the series and return with their heads held high. We will be keeping our fingers crossed, and in the meanwhile we salute them.  
The Daily Telegraph, UK

IS CHOKING within sight of victory a peculiarly Australian weakness, as many people have suggested since Australia again fell short of a modest fourth-innings target on Tuesday? The issue is a sensitive one, for it reflects not on the Australians' skill, but on personal qualities such as resilience, competitiveness and the ability to keep one's nerve in a tight situation.  
Sydney Morning Herald, Australia

THE AUSSIES self-destructed with the professional stupidity England have displayed all winter. But they did so because England applied pressure, pressure, pressure. Even

the best side in the world can crumble when under the hammer. What a shame England have squeezed the enemy only when it is almost too late.  
The Sun, UK

TO SEE this beleaguered team play with such spirit did the heart a power of good. Some said the Ashes were no longer worth the fuss. England made a nonsense of such notions with this forthright display. Sydney had seemed to be a damp squib. But the series resumes with a revived touring party determined to square the account. It should be another cracking contest between these ancient rivals.  
The Age, Australia

Having been dismissed so often the players will savour the moment that they turned the tables. They will wallow in their transformation from no-hopers to national heroes. We may continue to ruminate in melancholy terms about the state of English cricket. For the moment it should be enough to congratulate them on their win and thank them for providing a little piece of August in late December.  
The Times, UK



RIGHT  
OF REPLYANN  
ROBINSON

The director general of the British Retail Consortium defends the retail industry

I AM fed up with the charge that retailers in Britain are taking consumers for a ride. The retail industry is highly competitive and there is no trace of complacency within it. Over the last 10 years the price of goods in shops has fallen in real terms by 13 per cent. In the last year alone, the price of 200 of the most commonly bought goods fell by nearly 1 per cent.

I challenge other industries to match this performance, which has only been achieved by driving down costs and becoming one of the most efficient sectors in the UK. On what basis can it be claimed that there is overcharging when return on capital employed stands at only 6.9 per cent for retailing, compared with 13.6 per cent for wholesaling and 14.3 per cent for all other services?

The strength of the retail industry and one of the key drivers of its excellence has always been competition. If this is increased as a result of the euro or the growth of Internet shopping, it will be seen by the industry as an additional opportunity and not as a threat.

A basket of goods bought abroad compared to the same basket bought in the UK is often used as evidence by those who argue British retailers overcharge, but whether the comparison is favourable often depends on the choice of products.

There are also a number of key trading differences between countries which expose the bogus nature of many basket-based comparisons. These include obvious factors such as the exchange rate and less understood issues such as the cost of investment in retailing in the UK.

The range and quality of products on offer in the UK has grown significantly over the last 10 years from around 15,000 products available in the large supermarkets to more than 25,000 today. In a recent Mori survey 78 per cent of consumers said they were satisfied with the quality of goods offered and 88 per cent expressed satisfaction with the range available to them.

It is true that we have intelligent and discerning consumers in the UK and their high level of satisfaction only serves to demonstrate that retailing in this country is first class.

## A Muslim Yule shows New Britain at its best

THANK YOU for your cards and good wishes and the delicate way some of you asked if people like me celebrated Christmas. The answer is yes, and with genuine pleasure although, inevitably, there are complications mostly inside our hearts and heads about whether this means the end of our civilisations.

As one of my many wise aunts (all older women in the community are aunts with an absolute right to advise, bully and instruct you) puts it: "The question is whether we are afraid of dissolving like sugar in their pot of tea or whether we are proud that we are making their tea all the sweeter."

This year was affected by the situation in Iraq and by Ramadan but, nevertheless, around the country British Asians were seen to be doing Christmas in some style and in ways that would have been unimaginable even five years ago. They do so because they are much more confident of their presence and identity than they were then.

It is an expression not of assimilation - which we would reject as cultural suicide - but of a new kind of pluralistic society, where it

YASMIN  
ALIBHAI-BROWN

Christmas was not a day in 'Hello!', but it was happy, funny, and unpredictably affirming

is no longer necessary to buffet yourself against the cross winds of cultural influence. You know who you are and you believe this to be your nation.

As Nehru said: "I am an internationalist because I am so rooted in India." Once, if you participated in Christmas, you felt like you had stolen someone else's clothes. It was embarrassing and

alienating. You also felt that you were shedding your authentic self.

Even now there are some aspects of the festival that cause discomfort, but we are able to pick and choose what feels right against our skins. Trees in the home and vastly expensive presents (thank God) are still a rarity, and most of us cannot quite grapple with Father Christmas and his role in the birth of Christ. On the other hand, we love our children in the Nativity plays and long for the day when they will be the angels and not the donkeys and sheep.

But this is not only about us and how we are managing the changes that migration brings. What happens at Christmas is a reflection of a far more fundamental evolution within British society.

Just take our family. We did have a tree with lots of lovely golden cherubs (my husband is an ex-choirboy after all) plus huge nutcrackers, eagles and doves. This first confused, then amused, Vera, my mother-in-law from Shoreham, who had met one black person in her life before I turned up, a Muslim divorcee with a young son.

I wore a sari, mainly to reassure

myself that I was maintaining my eastern credentials. My mother Jena came and conspicuously prayed with her *tasbe* (prayer beads) through the day. Her English is somewhat limited by the fact that she taught herself the language by watching soap operas and *Crimestwatch*, and reading *Woman's Own*.

The two women hugged a lot and spoke viciously about thieves and asylum seekers. Vera is hard of hearing though she denies this, so during our conversations, when I failed to understand her strange replies, she repeated her sentences to me very slowly as if I was a deaf Croat.

Colin, my husband, teased Jena by telling her he had stuffed the turkey with pork. She told him eating "pig meat" would make him heartless. We paid for Vera to come to us by taxi. She was overwhelmed and told us stories about the poverty she had grown up in.

Her gratitude was unexpected and I informed her that as the mother-in-law of an Asian woman she could demand a whole lot more and even slap me around if I irritated her. She seemed very troubled

by this. Then there was the Canadian, married to my cousin, who is our daughter's godmother, and my son, now studying in Edinburgh, who is becoming an ardent Scotsman. It was not a day in *Hello!*, but it was happy, funny, fraught too, and unpredictably affirming.

I wish these changes were better understood by the ignorant commentators who use this time of the year to decry multiculturalism, because their precious children are heard singing songs from foreign parts or the lights in the streets of Birmingham are too secular (unlike the lights in Regent Street, which feature the new Christian God Tango) or because in their eyes it is our presence that is killing off Christianity. They rail against these things because, unlike us, they are now in a state of panic about who they are and are desperate not to let go of the false images of cultural purity and perfection.

Evolution is likely to heighten this insecurity. But New Britain already exists. It is a country where *de facto* integration has surpassed our understanding of it. This is what I found when I was research-

ing my forthcoming book on multiculturalism (to be published by the Institute of Public Policy Research). Social and racial fissures do of course still exist and blight lives, but the story is much more positive than either cultural pedants or adamant anti-racists want to believe.

Political leaders must develop a different narrative about pluralism so that people are able to respond with pride rather than prejudice to what has been achieved. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, seems to be leading the way. A month ago, he made a powerful statement: "There are those who would retreat from an expansive idea of Britishness into a constricted shell of right-wing English nationalism. My vision of Britain comes not from uniformity but from celebrating diversity. I understand Britishness as being outward-looking, open, internationalist, with a commitment to democracy."

This understanding is already being lived out in Britain by its newest immigrant communities. Perhaps in time their way of living can serve as a model for others.

Have a Happy Multicultural New Year.

Declare for the euro now, Mr Blair.  
But, above all, stop the dithering

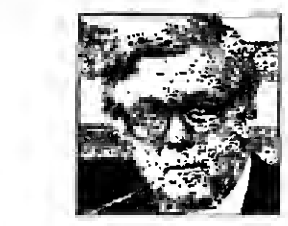
THE SCALE of the undertaking is breathtaking and its consequences are radical. Tomorrow, a new currency, the euro, will be born: the deutschmark, French franc and nine other national currencies become regional sub-units of the euro. In three years, they will be abolished. In the interim, the euro will quickly emerge as the principal medium of business and governmental transactions in Europe, and as a major reserve currency and denominator of world trade.

Starting this January, there will be a single monetary policy, with a common interest rate, for the largest integrated economic grouping in the Western world: the euro-zone of some 300 million consumers. Economic and monetary union (Emu) is quite simply the most ambitious European initiative to be launched since the Second World War.

Sitting on the sidelines, from the illusory comfort of self-imposed exile, there is a tendency in Britain to believe that we can simply wait upon events with equanimity, and judge the success or failure of the single currency in our own time and on our own terms. If only it were so.

In reality, Britain's whole relationship to Europe, and with it our place in the world, is about to change. The single-currency euro-zone, five times the size of the British economy and right on our own doorstep, will have subsumed our largest trading market. Outside looking in, we will have to react to an economic order in which others are calling the shots, and from whose key decisions we have chosen to exclude ourselves.

This situation will intensify as Emu widens and deepens: within a decade the euro-zone could comprise 30-plus states. More and more issues will be settled without our voice being heard, on terms we

GEOFFREY  
HOWE

The euro will quickly emerge as a major reserve currency and world trade denominator

have not helped define. The longer we spend outside, the more difficult we may find it to get in. Another era of agonising reappraisal for Britain - and all too easily one of anguished indecision - is about to begin.

What should we do? First of all, we should wish Emu to succeed, and plan on it doing so. This project is too important for continental leaders to allow it to fail; their commitment to it is enormous and impressive. And second, as a country, we should consciously decide to decide - that is resolve to - sooner rather than later, make a choice for or against membership of the single currency. We should not let the national debate drag on indefinitely, without conclusion.

Most importantly, the Government should, I believe, commit itself to Britain joining Emu, not just in principle, but in practice. Its policy of "if" should become one of "when", and be backed by economic policies designed to maximise the chances of entry. The Government should make serious, practical preparations for Emu membership, so that

if the referendum is positive, we can enter soon after the people choose.

To move ahead on this agenda, Tony Blair and his colleagues have got to start taking some risks. Britain will not join Emu by accident. Sometimes this Government looks like a football team passing the ball around the pitch, in the hope that eventually it will just end up in goal. But at some point, somebody has to shoot for goal.

The best route open to Mr Blair is to set a target date for UK entry, perhaps January 2003, and say that, provided the economics are right, he intends to put the question to the people very soon after the next general election. In preparation for entry, the Government should make it plain that domestic economic policy will be tailored to promoting the necessary degree of cyclical convergence with the euro-zone. In parallel, it should introduce, in this parliament, a "paving" Bill designed to remove legal and other obstacles to membership and use of the euro. As a result, the Government would have established a clear policy; business would have a specific planning horizon, and the electorate would be offered a serious choice.

At the moment, the opposite approach is being pursued. Mr Blair seems to be hoping that political ambiguity will allow him complete freedom in choosing the entry date; that cyclical convergence will happen of its own accord; that business preparations will lead to official ones, and that public opinion will come around to the single currency with out the Government risking much political capital on the project. Not so.

The Government has to face the fact that critics will be seeking to highlight every economic problem on the Continent, however minor, as an inherent consequence of Emu. They will manufacture or exaggerate



Jacques Santer (right) and European Monetary Affairs Commissioner Yves Thibault de Silguy display a model euro coin for the currency's unveiling in May

threats far beyond reality - as so recently on tax harmonisation - and create hogwashes with ambitions to subvert a thousand years of our island's history. Countering this onslaught will need to be a major priority for the Treasury and for Number Ten.

Equally however, with every day that passes, the immensity of the new economic reality in Europe can and should become more apparent, and with it the opportunities for Britain of positive participation. The eurocentric ideology of national isolation will seem increasingly at odds with the new economic and political inter-dependence, generated by market liberalism, which lies at the heart of British success in the world today. This is a battle of ideas which can be won.

If Labour's leaders think they can avoid Emu being a key issue at the next general election, they are mis-

taken. They must prepare the ground now for a strong, robust defence of their euro-policy in 2001 or 2002. If they decline to answer the important questions when the election comes, then entry in the next parliament will prove difficult.

Worse, equivocation could slip into a temptation effectively to rule out Emu entry in the next parliament in order to close off eurosceptic attack. The game would then be lost. Ministers' panicky responses in October 1997 to self-generated media leaks on the date of Emu entry provide a salutary warning of how things can go wrong when decision-makers lose their strategic compass.

Overall, the greatest risk to UK entry into the single currency lies, not in the constraint of public opinion, but in the absence so far of sustained pro-Emu leadership from the Government. Evasion, inertia or indecision are no substitutes for in-

forming, educating and persuading the electorate about the strong merits of the single-currency case. The introduction of the euro in 11 countries, starting tomorrow, offers a perfect moment to begin that process.

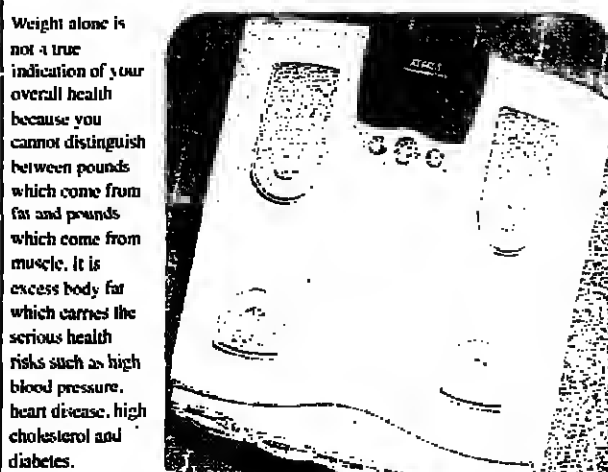
As Kenneth Clarke, Michael Heseltine, myself and others have made clear, pro-European Conservatives will back the Prime Minister in promoting the right policies for Britain - but it is only he and his Government that can give the lead.

The advent of Emu is an opportunity for Mr Blair to demonstrate such leadership. His New Year's resolution should be to act boldly in the national interest. He could well be surprised by the strength of the response.

Lord Howe of Aberavon was Chancellor of the Exchequer 1979-83; Foreign Secretary 1983-89, and Deputy Prime Minister 1989-90

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SUGGESTED NEW Year's resolutions for Tony Blair continue to arrive in Pandora's bulging box as the year draws to a close. (Remember: the deadline is today at noon, in time to forward all, via Downing Street, to the Blair family holiday encampment in the Indian Ocean. The best resolution wins a bottle of invigorating Orkney Islands malt.)

"He should resolve to stop sucking up to Bill Clinton," proposes Peter Larp, a retired soldier from Bampton, Devon. Somewhat elliptically, former Tory chancellor Norman Lamont told Pandora that Blair "ought to resolve to apply to himself the same standards he seeks to apply to others". Bernard Ingham, Margaret Thatcher's former Downing Street press spokesman, has two highly specific recommendations: "Be infinitely less pious than he is now, and move the Government away from their ridiculous pre-occupation with the media, which will do them a great deal of damage in the long run." More to come later in this column.

RICHARD BRANSON's diary of his recent attempt to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon has been widely

excerpted - with one exception. That is the sign-off to his plea to Libyan strongman Colonel Gaddafi, who had first granted permission to cross Libyan territory, and then rescinded it in mid-flight. "Because of this emergency condition, we simply do not know how to avoid crossing your airspace. We hope that you will grant us emergency permission under these circumstances via your air traffic control services."

wrote a desperate Branson. The tycoon ended his missive most endearingly: "I am sir your most obedient servant."

ERIC CLAPTON's seminal Sixties band Cream returned to the spotlight in *Disraeli Gears*, a new history of the band. Author John Platt explains that "supergroup" Cream, whose performing life was comparatively short, almost separated before they began

because of the animosity between drummer Ginger Baker and bassist Jack Bruce. It seems that Baker had already fired Bruce from a band before the birth of Cream. At the height of the tension between the two musicians, reports Platt, Ginger even threatened Bruce on stage with a knife. Nevertheless, Clapton insisted that Bruce, a fellow member of John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, join the new group, ensuring that plenty of "creative tension" would produce exceptional music.

NO LESS than five suggested Blair New Year's resolutions have arrived from vociferous gay rights campaigner Peter Tatchell: "to get a decent haircut; rediscover socialism; appoint Mandelson ambassador for life to Kazakhstan; give John Prescott the power and resources to implement an integrated public transport policy; abolish all forms of discrimination based on age/religion/sexuality and HIV status". A more measured but

equally topical resolution offered by MP Norman Baker, the Lib Dem transport spokesman: "to find out what the word 'environment' means". Labour MP Paul Flynn, on the other hand, urges Blair to "stop taking the tabloids next year". Finally, independent publisher and author Jay Landesman suggests that Blair's resolution should be "to convince Peter Lilley to cross the floor, join the Cabinet and take Mandelson's place at his right hand. Above all, Tony should resist the urge to resign."

JULIET STEVENSON (pictured) is to star in a National Theatre production of Noel Coward's *Private Lives* next year. Pandora can reveal for the first time. A previous attempt to stage the play with Fiona Shaw in the lead was abandoned; Shaw went on to star in the National's adaptation of Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. The key question is who will play the male lead in Coward's play. It was this problem that scuppered the National's last attempt. The role demands an exceptional actor aged about 40. Pandora's source says all the chief British candidates are too busy earning millions in Hollywood.



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# Hurd Hatfield

THE ACTOR Hurd Hatfield will always be associated with the film role that made him a star, that of the aesthetically young man who remains youthful through the years while a portrait of himself in the attic displays the aberrations of his life. In MGM's film version of Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

He would later say, however, that the role was a curse as well as a blessing, for within five years he was appearing in B movies, and throughout the rest of his life he would be associated with that single role, despite a long and varied career in film, television and variety theatre. "I have been haunted by *The Picture of Dorian Gray*", he said. "New York, London, anywhere I'm making a personal appearance, people will talk about other things but they always get back to *Dorian Gray*." Coincidentally, until recently Hatfield's appearance remained remarkably youthful, and he became accustomed to being asked if he kept a painting of himself in his attic.

He was born William Rukard Hurd Hatfield in New York City in 1918. He won a scholarship to study acting at Michael Chekhov's Dartington Hall company in Devon, England, and made his professional debut in the spring of 1939 playing the Baron in scenes from *The Lower Depths* at the company's theatre. Returning to the United States with Chekhov's company, he toured as Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night*, Cade in *Richard II*, and Gloucester in *King Lear*, before making his Broadway debut as Kirov in *The Possessed* (1939).

This adaptation of several Dostoevsky works into one sombre 15-scene play ran for only 14 performances, with both the acting and Chekhov's direction deemed excessively stylised. While the company was playing on the West Coast, Hatfield was signed by MGM and cast as Lao San in the studio's 1944 adaptation of Pearl Buck's epic novel *Dragon Seed*, about the effect of Japanese invasion on a family of Chinese farmers. "That was

some experience," said Hatfield later. "A nightmare! Walter Huston was my father, Katharine Hepburn my sister, Aline MacMahon from New York my mother, Turkish Turhan Bey my brother, Russian Akim Tamiroff my uncle - it was a very odd Chinese family!"

Hatfield then auditioned for the role of vain young sensualist who trades his soul for eternal youth in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945). "Oscar Wilde's original Dorian is blond and blue-eyed," he said later, "and here I was, this gloomy-looking creature. I almost didn't go to the audition, and when I did, all these blond Adonises were to the right and left of me. I looked like one of their agents!"

The director Albert Lewin had just written and directed a successful transcription of Somerset Maugham's *The Moon and Sixpence*, and he was given a large budget to make an opulent and literate version of Wilde's novel, though critics objected to the many liberties that were taken with the story. The strict censorship of the time worked in some extent in the film's favour, making the suggestions of corrup-

Hatfield's enigmatic, passive performance was given a mixed reception (one critic described his lack of facial animation to that of an actress playing Trilby while under the hypnotic spell of Svengali). Variety reported, "He plays it with little feeling, as apparently intended, and does it well... he's singularly Narcissistic all the way." The majority felt that the actor's immobile features and flat tones suggested the mixture of beauty and depravity called for, but although the film was a great success it failed to ignite Hatfield's film career. "The film didn't make me popular in Hollywood," he commented later. "It was too odd, too avant-garde, too ahead of its time. The decadence, the hints of homosexuality and so on, made me a leper! Nobody knew I had a sense of humour, and people wouldn't even have lunch with me."

His next film was an independent production, the off-beat *Diary of a Chambermaid* (1946), adapted by Burgess Meredith from Octave Mirbeau's 1900 novel *Le Journal d'une femme de chambre* and directed by Jean Renoir, who was a great ad-

He had a better role in Michael Curtiz's enjoyable thriller *The Unsuspected* (1947), as an artist driven to alcohol by his wife's infidelities. In Walter Wanger's costly but ponderous *Joan of Arc* (1948), Hatfield played Father Pasquerel, chaplain to Joan (Ingrid Bergman), but, when this was followed by roles as the villain in two B movies, *The Checkered Coat* (1950), as a psychotic killer called Creepy, and *Chinatown at Midnight* (1950), he decided to return to the stage.

In 1952 he appeared on Broadway as Dominic in Christopher Fry's *Venus Observed*, directed by Laurence Olivier, and the following year played Lord Byron and Don Quixote in Tennessee Williams's *Camino Real*, directed by Elia Kazan. He was Prince Paul in the Broadway production of *Anastasia* (1954), played the title role in Julius Caesar in the inaugural season of the American Shakespeare Festival at Connecticut, Stratford (1955) and appeared as Don John in John Gielgud's legendary production of *Much Ado About Nothing* (1959).

He occasionally returned to Hollywood, notably for two sexually ambivalent roles: the epicene follower of Billy the Kid (Paul Newman) in Arthur Penn's film of Gore Vidal's *The Left-Handed Gun* (1958) and a homosexual antique dealer considered a suspect in *The Boston Strangler* (1968) - the scene in which he is questioned by a liberal police officer (Henry Fonda) was one of the most potent in the film. He was in two of 1965's epics, *King of Kings* and *El Cid*, and in 1968 returned to the screen to play the ailing grandfather of Jessica Lange. Sissy Spacek and Diane Keaton in *Crimes of the Heart*.

His prolific television work included *The Rivals* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (both 1950), the title roles in *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1958) and *Don Juan in Hell* (1960), episodes of *Suspense*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *Murder She Wrote*, and in 1963 an Emmy-nominated performance as Rothschild in *The Invincible Mr Disraeli*.



Hatfield in the title role of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, 1945

In recent years he toured Germany, Northern Ireland, Latvia and Russia in *The Son of Whistler's Mother*, a one-man play about James McNeill Whistler, and in July 1997 he made a personal appearance at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in connection with an exhibition of paintings by Albright (including *Dorian Gray*).

A bachelor, Hurd Hatfield had lived for many years on an estate in Ireland and also owned a house on Long Island, commuting for acting assignments. He recently stated that he had accepted his permanent

association with the role of Gray, even though the film had for him been "a terrible ordeal in self-control, everything being so cerebral". He added, "But not many actors are fortunate enough to have made a classic. One friend told me it's a good thing I didn't make *Dracula* and have my entire professional life dominated by that!"

TOM VALLANCE

William Rukard Hurd Hatfield, actor, born New York 7 December 1918; died Monkstown, Co Cork 25 December 1998.

## Emilio Fermín Mignone

EMILIO FERMIN MIGNONE was at once a tower of strength and very fragile. Slightly hunched, he had a quiet sense of humour in the contained fashion of lives tinged with tragedy. He was affable, knowledgeable and consistent in his speech in the style of most veteran lawyers.

Argentina's constitutional present and its dictatorial past held for him a need to understand a political transition that he had accepted. But nobody understood how he had come to terms with it, except through his strong religious belief. He lived and campaigned with his personal tragedy ever present: his daughter was abducted and became one of Argentina's thousands of "disappeared" on 24 May 1976. She was a child psychologist working in a shanty town in the Flores area west of Buenos Aires. Her work was seen as subversive by the military dictatorship that seized power that March.

The obituaries in Argentina recall him as an institutional man - a civil servant in human rights. He founded the Centre for Legal and Social Studies ("Cels") in 1978, and became one of Argentina's most notable and persistent human rights campaigners. He had begun his protest against the dictatorship shortly after its installation, distributing his criticisms to Buenos Aires newspapers. His daughter had helped him deliver his circulars.

There has to be some significance that he died at the British Hospital in Buenos Aires. As a member of the executive of the Article 19 human rights organisation in the late 1980s he enjoyed his brief visits to London and described it as the one city in the world where he felt at peace.

Mignone began his working life as a lawyer and a teacher. Between 1948 and 1952 he edited his home town newspaper, *La Voz de Luján* - ironically, during the government of Perón, who gaged all the Argentine press from the time he took office in 1946. Mignone, however, took a sympathy for Peronism's populist social welfare.

He lived in Washington DC for a time in the mid-1960s, advising on education at the Organisation of American States. In 1968, he became under-secretary for education during the regime of General Juan Carlos Onganía, a small-time despot who is largely responsible for precipitating Argentina into near civil war in the 1970s, but in whom Mignone saw a staunch Roman Catholic and a valid successor to Peronism.

In June 1973, the elected Peronist government appointed him to head the national university of Luján, a job he held until the coup. During the dictatorship he was a member of the executive of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights (APDH) and was constantly followed and threatened by military security agents. In 1986 he published his essay "Church and Dictatorship", criticising the Church for supporting the military regime.

In July 1985, during the trials of the military junta leaders, he told the former dictators: "You took government with a plan to kidnap, torture and murder." The remark shattered the silence in the courtroom, and shook the lingering sense of fear in Buenos Aires.

ANDREW GRAHAM-YOULL

Emilio Fermín Mignone, lawyer and human rights campaigner, born Luján, Argentina 22 July 1922; married (five daughters); died Buenos Aires 21 December 1998.

*Dorian Gray didn't make me popular in Hollywood. It was too odd, too avant-garde, too ahead of its time*

tion and decadence all the more telling for being oblique.

Harry Stradling's photography, which blazed into colour from black-and-white when it showed the ageing, increasingly dissolute portrait by Ivan Albright, won an Academy Award. George Sanders was ideally cast as the cynical misogynist Lord Henry Wotton and Angela Lansbury won an Oscar nomination for her portrayal of Sybil Vane, the music-hall singer whose plaintive rendition of "Little Yellow Bird" wins Gray's heart before he is persuaded by Wotton to jilt her cruelly.

mirer of Paulette Goddard, Meredith's wife and the star of the film. In this strongly cast production, Hatfield held his own as the consumptive son of a wealthy landowner who finds strength and redemption through the love of a chambermaid, but the film, now regarded as a minor classic, was only a *succès d'estime* at the time of its release, and Hatfield returned to MGM to play a subsidiary role as one of the scientists working on the atom bomb in the studio's semi-documentary of the weapon's development, *The Beginning or the End* (1947).

## Matt Gillies

MATT GILLIES was as seminally important to Leicester City during the 1960s as were his famous fellow Scots Matt Busby and Bill Shankly to Manchester United and Liverpool. Certainly both held Gillies in immense esteem and believed he had deserved better than his single 1964 League Cup triumph with the unfashionable Foxes, so inspired was his work. Indeed, Gillies transformed Leicester from a club which had yo-yoed dizzily between the First and Second Divisions during the second half of the 1950s into one of the elite night's more solid citizens.

Apart from that one trophy success, between 1961 and 1967 there were four top-eight League finishes, the first European foray in the club's history, FA Cup Final appearances in 1961 and 1963 and a second League Cup Final outing in 1965. This was a rapturously impressive record.

In personality, Gillies resembled the stately Busby more closely than the abrasively excitable Shankly. Gentlemanly, unassuming and a



A silver-tongued diplomat

silver-tongued diplomat, he rejoiced in the respect of most players, possessing the priceless knack - from Leicester's viewpoint - of deflecting wage demands with pure charm, footballers left his office with smiles but with little extra in their pockets.

He was a shrewd judge of raw talent, too, a gift illustrated most vividly by his assessment of the rookie

Frank McLintock. After an inconclusive trial, the club was about to reject the scrawny, Gorbals-raised teenager, but Gillies saw something in him others had missed. McLintock stayed and matured into one of Leicester's most influential performers, going on to star for Arsenal. Gillies was a canny operator in the transfer market, his most vaunted transaction being the £7,000 acquisition of Gordon Banks, a youthful goalkeeper destined for greatness, from Chesterfield in 1959. There were other bargains, notably the Scottish play-maker Dave Gibson and the winger Mike Stringfellow, but he was not afraid to invest boldly, either as he proved by paying Fulham a British record £150,000 fee for the marksman Allan Clarke in 1968.

Indeed, Gillies was never less than decisive. For instance, in 1961 he astounded the soccer world by axing his prolific centre-forward, Ken Leek, for the FA Cup Final meeting with mighty Spurs, opting instead to field the inexperienced Hugh McLintock. Six years later his

faith in the unproven Peter Shilton prompted him to sell the world's best goalkeeper, Banks, to Stoke City. Shilton went on to play more League games and make more appearances for England than anyone in the history of the game. Finally, Gillies even left Leicester on a point of principle, resigning after the board had sacked his trusted coach, Bert Johnson, following a lean spell of results which was to culminate in relegation.

Though Gillies spent his working life in football, in his teens he was bent on a career in medicine. His studies were interrupted by war and he became a navigator in RAF Bomber Command. Meanwhile he had emerged as a promising half-back and served Motherwell as an amateur before signing for Bolton Wanderers in 1942. After the conflict he broke into the Trotters' senior side at right half, then became a reliable centre-half and captain before losing out to younger men.

In January 1952 Gillies joined Leicester for £2,500 and was the regular stopper in the side that lifted the

Second Division Championship in 1954. His playing days drew to a close during the subsequent disappointing First Division campaign and in 1956, after contemplating a future in physiotherapy, he turned to coaching.

Then, when David Halliday vacated the boss's chair in November 1958, Gillies became caretaker manager, accepting the job permanently two months later. Working closely with Bert Johnson, he turned around the fortunes of the struggling First Division outfit, his success based on a remarkably sound defence.

The team reached its peak in 1962/63 when, for a time, there was a possibility of the hallowed League and FA Cup double, and Leicester were favourites to win the Wembley meeting with Manchester United. The following season brought compensation with a two-legged League Cup Final victory over Stoke, and City came close to retaining the trophy in 1964/65, being beaten by Chelsea in the final after that Gillies' Foxes remained splendidly competitive until 1968/69, when a poor start to the

season precipitated Johnson's dismissal and the manager's departure.

Towards the end of his Filbert Street tenure Gillies had become careworn and many were surprised when he took charge of Nottingham Forest, then struggling near the foot of the First Division - though he remained at the City Ground for nearly four years, it proved an unhappy reign. The club seemed intent on selling its best players, the replacements proved inadequate and they were relegated in 1971/72. In October 1972, with Forest doing poorly in the Second Division, Gillies resigned. It was a sadly anti-climactic ending to an accomplished career.

IVAN PONTING

Matthew Mairhead Gillies, footballer and manager, born Loganlea, West Lothian 12 August 1921; played for Bolton Wanderers 1942-52, Leicester City 1952-58, married Leicester City 1958-68, Nottingham Forest 1969-72; married (one son, one daughter); died Nottingham 24 December 1998.

## GAZETTE

### BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

#### BIRTHS

CHIDWICK: On Monday 21 December 1988 at Maidstone, to Sandra and Russell Chidwick, a daughter, Gabrielle Thamsin, a little sister for Joshua.

FOX McCLURE: Ruben River was born on Christmas Eve at University College Hospital, London, to Geovieve and Richard.

JONES: Martin David, a son for Simon and Karen and a first grandchild for both Ian and Christine Henderson and Tony and Sally Jones, was born on 12 December 1988 at Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion, Edinburgh.

#### CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am: 1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards.

#### BIRTHDAYS

Mr Douglas Anthony, former Deputy Prime Minister in Australia, 69; Mr Edward Glanville Benn, life president, Benn Bros, 93; Mr Phil Blakeway, rugby player, 48; Sir George Blunden, former Deputy Governor, Bank of England, 76; Mr Michael Bonalack, Secretary, Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, 64; Sir George Christie, chairman, Glydebourne Productions, 64; Mr Stephen Cleobury, Organist, Cambridge University, 50; Air Marshal Sir Patrick Dunn, 86; Sir Anthony Hopkins, actor, 61; Miss Tess Jaray, artist, 61; Mr Ben Kingsley, actor, 55; Mr Brian McGratten, rugby player, 39; Mr Eric Mackay, former Editor of *The Scotsman*, 76; Miss Sarah Miles, actress, 55; Dr Valerie Pearl, former President, New Hall, Cambridge, 72; Mr Jean-Pierre Rives, rugby player, 46; Mr Nigel Rudd, chairman, Williams Holdings, 52; Sir John Sainty, former Clerk of the Parliaments, 64; Mr Alexander Salmond

MP, 44; The Right Rev Timothy Stevens, Bishop Suffragan of Dunwich, 52; Miss Donna Summer, singer, 50; Mr Hugh Tunnell, former ambassador to Bahrain, 63; Sir David Walker, chairman, Morgan Stanley Group, 59.

#### ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, 1720; Henri-Emile Benoit Matisse, painter, 1899; Jule Styne (Julius Kerwin Stein), songwriter and composer, 1905. Deaths: John Wycliffe, reformer, 1384; Sir Malcolm Campbell, speedster, 1948; Canon Lewis John Collins, peace campaigner, 1982. On this day: the chiming of Big Ben were broadcast for the first time, 1923; the British army abandoned the use of the lance, 1927; the Home Guard was disbanded, 1945; the farthing ceased to be legal currency, 1980. Today is Hogmanay in Scotland and the Feast Day of St Columba of Sens, St John Francis Regis, St Melania the Younger and St Silvester I, pope.

## Take a time-trip outside the Dome

BRACE YOURSELF for the Year of the Millennium - and for a twelvemonth of intensifying battle about the Dome! "Imagine What We Can Do Tomorrow" was the slogan launched in the Christmas Eve advert for the £800m project, paid for by the National Lottery. It was a genuflection to the Dome's theme of Time, as were the Easter Island statues which figured prominently in its summary of world history since the last millennium.

It was an unfortunate choice; the Easter Island statues witness to some centuries of genocidal warfare and ecological destruction even before they were "discovered". More than that the rest of the "millennial landmarks", chosen by focus groups, are equally arbitrary or banal.

The Dome has attracted a certain hitheness; especially sharp is the epithet, adapted from Susan Sontag, "Bad enough to be funny, but not bad enough to be fun". Ouch! But the churches have perhaps been unwise in joining in the grumbling. For it uncannily recalls an earlier Dome Project, in which the Jubilee of 1500 was celebrated with similarly extravagant display. That too was paid for by the gullible, seeking time off from purgatory for cash. Indulgences - an out-come tax rather than an income tax - did for Christendom what the Poll Tax did for Margaret Thatcher. For the 16th-century dome was the new St Peter's in Rome.

Not that Protestants can afford to be smug about that. The Archbishop of York moved on to dangerous ground with his complaint that the Dome is out

### MEANINGS OF CHRISTMAS

JOHN KENNEDY

*To reflect more truly on the past millennium, turn your back on Mr Mandelson's extravaganza and study the panorama along the Thames*

of keeping with Christian humility, baby Jesus, the manger etc. Well, I love York Minster, but it bears few manger-like features, and not even Peter Mandelson would have aspired to the splendours of the archbishop's official residence.

The problem is this, both Churches and Domers suffer the same propensity to deny the reality of power in history. So let's take an alternative time-trip, starting from the hill in Greenwich above the Dome. Down the hill stands the Queen's House, built by Inigo Jones for James I, the creator of Protestant Britain and perhaps the most theological British monarch. The English Bible rightly bears his name. He memorably engaged in learned dialogue with the Jesuit Henry Garnet, who had been tortured half to death for his alleged role in the Gunpowder Plot. It's rugged stuff, theology, when power is involved.

Looming beside it is the double-domed perfection of Wren's Royal Naval Hospital. The need for it is plain from the nearby monument to General Wolfe, Victor of Quebec: he, Clive and others annexed a quarter of the globe in the mid-18th century, but only from the French, so no harm done. But it was all done under cover of a rather noisy Protestantism. Yes, Ian Paisley is an historical relic, but he is a genuine one - these things once mattered.

But the conflicts of power have moved away from religion into the arena of economics. Beyond the river is the Isle of Dogs. Once its docks were central to the global wealth of the British Empire. That may have vanished but it is still a symbol of the secular nature of power in contemporary Britain. For standing like an exclamation mark over the new Docklands is the great tower of Canary Wharf. Here is the greatest concentration of the media in Britain, from the mighty *Telegraph* to the smaller but perfectly formed *Independent*. Here also are merchant banks and advertising agencies through which pass financial flows which make millions of people richer, and other millions poorer. This, rather than the Dome, is the symbol of our future world. For here, without noise or movement, churns away all that *mélée of ambition and principle, ruthlessness and sympathy, greed and conviction* that makes humanity what it is - and which the Dome so snugly masks.

It is all much less religious than in previous eras - but not necessarily less moral. In the days when the Churches had real power, they responded to current exigencies no less ruthlessly

than some tenants of Canary Wharf do now. This needs to be remembered now that the Churches are spectators trying to be referees.

It is in response to that changed reality that the Churches have produced a Millennium Resolution (see below) which has been widely mocked - for it fails to mention either God or Jesus Christ who is supposedly the object of Millennial attention. But it is realistic to do so. The churches have planned numerous celebrations for the faithful of the 2,000th anniversary of the birth of Christ. But the Resolution appeals to a universal audience, and gets it about right. It has sharp convictions about shared values, and the right kind of humility in acknowledging that these are not the exclusive property of the Church.

The stark fact is this. The coming Millennium will see a continuing decline in the power of Church-as-Referee. But society will negotiate its own deals with power, and will likely do so no worse than did Christendom. And, if Christians will hold influence rather than enjoy privilege, that is witness enough to their faith. So take your time-trip in Greenwich Park and read the churches' desire for the Millennium against the turbulent panorama below.

Let there be Respect for the earth  
Love in our lives  
Delight in the good  
Forgiveness for past wrongs  
And from now on a new start.

John Kennedy is political affairs secretary of the Methodist Church



# Can we have sex and stay friends?

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Stephen Byers, the Secretary of State at the Department of Trade and Industry, will resolve that this year, he will definitely crack the nine time table.

Will Carling must resolve to go out with some brunettes in the future, given the mess his life has become: the hands of a dozen identical slender blondes.

Emma Noble must undertake to get herself some underwear this year.

Lord Irvine of Lairg must try to get out more - Ro-

Your swivel-headed razor  
 The toothpaste and your towel  
 Your calculator, laptop and your socks  
 Surrendered at the airport  
 Are lost somewhere in time  
 Millennial gremlins sabotaged the clocks  
 And through the whirling vortex  
 Suitcases disappear  
 As down the time continuum they spin  
 The baggage handlers, helpless  
 Apologise at length  
 And swear to God they put the objects in  
 The highwaymen of Hounslow  
 Found luggage on the heath  
 Two hundred years before the airport came  
 The credit cards were useless  
 Pyjamas thrown away  
 But duty-free Jack Daniels worked the same  
 The coachmen and postillions  
 Along the Western Road  
 Once puzzled by the objects on the ground  
 Unpacked the foreign Walkmans  
 Then drove to Drum 'n' Bass  
 In trackuits and the baseball caps they found  
 A hurried historian  
 Presents to a museum  
 Possessions pipelayers found beneath a floor  
 The Restoration trainers  
 Some Georgian shaving foam  
 Deodorant from the English Civil War  
 And down the sleeping centuries  
 The peace is then disturbed  
 As missing mobile phones begin to ring  
 But history's baggage handlers  
 Will answer much the same:  
 "Prithee sir - I have not glimpsed the thing!"

Years has succeeded this year as demonstrated with over 20 successful developments seeking approval in March and April. The developers are confident that the market is strong and are looking for more projects. The market is strong and are looking for more projects. The market is strong and are looking for more projects.



# Labour's end of term report

Has the Government started to honour its election pledge to prioritise education? Experts give their mark out of 10

**BARONESS PERRY**, Conservative peer, former director of South Bank University and HMI (supervisor of teaching and administration in schools). Now president of Lucy Cavendish College Cambridge. Mark: 6 out of 10.

"In higher education it's been a disaster. I can't tell you how angry I am with the Government. Removing student maintenance grants and introducing a tuition fee has hit the most deprived people in society. The only people who got grants were the poorer students. For mature students like mine it's an unclimbable mountain. They've got to find an extra £6,000 a year. Very little of the fee money is coming in to improve universities. Overall, universities' money has gone down by 1 per cent. But I'm delighted to see more money going into further education. On schools, I welcome the proposals for better induction for new teachers. But performance-related pay is not appropriate for the teaching profession. I would like to see a much better pay scale for all teachers, but professional forms of weed-

years neglect of school buildings. Although there's argument about how much money will really be available, it's clearly a far bigger sum for buildings than ever before. I think it's the first time a government has done that. Reducing class sizes for younger age groups is a step in the right direction. The Green Paper on the teaching profession has a lot of good things in it. There are problems with performance-related pay. What stops the Government getting 10 out of 10 is the continuing emphasis from Downing Street on being tough, tough on teachers. It is de-motivating to the profession. The other negative thing was the reappointment of Chris Woodhead, Chief Inspector of Schools, on a huge salary increase."

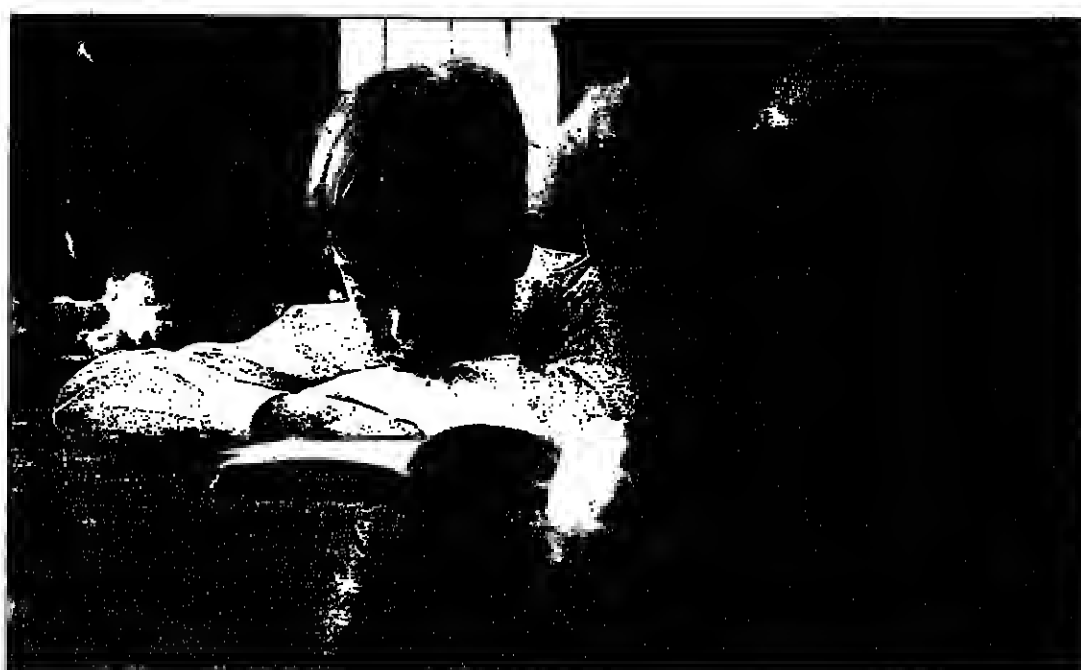
**BETHAN MARSHALL**, lecturer in education at King's College London. Mark: 7-and-a-half out of 10.

"The Government is still far too keen to tell teachers what to do. It has put considerably more money into schools than the Conservatives - and that's a good thing. And the Green Paper will produce better salaries for the vast majority of teachers."

**TED WRAGG**, professor of education, University of Exeter. Mark: 9 out of 10.

"It's had a very good year. It put £2,000 into each school for books, which was greatly needed, especially when you consider that a quarter of primary schools were spending £5 or less per pupil per year on all books. The £5bn on school buildings is also significant. We've had 20

But the Government is still too prescriptive. I'm not sure it has yet got right the balance between supporting teachers and putting pressure on them. Chris Woodhead is still criticising teachers all the time. There is a crisis in recruitment and that has to do with status. And status is more than just money. You won't attract bright graduates if you're overly restrictive of the profession."



Every school in the country received an extra £2,000 for books this year

er education minister Baroness Blackstone's vindictive treatment of Oxford and Cambridge."

**NIGEL DE GRUCHY**, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers. Mark: 7 out of 10.

"The White Paper on fairness at work and the Green Paper on teachers have enormous potential but we don't know what's going to be delivered. If they flop and we don't get a successful outcome, then the marks would sink below five. We're not in favour of performance-related pay for teachers. Teachers should be rated for their skill, knowledge, and commitment as opposed to the outputs - exam and test results, which are influenced by the teacher but over which the teacher has nowhere near total control."

**LAURIE TAYLOR**, writer and broadcaster and former professor of sociology at York University. Mark: 7 out of 10.

"I've been pleased by the emphasis on further education, because for years further education has been underfunded and undervalued. Yet it is doing exactly what the Government wants to bring education and training to more people. I'm very worried about the failure to recognise that new universities are discriminated against in the university hierarchy. I dislike the way this Government treats the universities as a level playing field, when new universities are also doing the function of many colleges of further ed-

ucation, taking people in and providing access, working out ways of providing courses with less resources than other universities. No measure of value added has been developed to right the balance."

**MARTIN STEPHEN**, High Master of Manchester Grammar School. Mark: 8 out of 10.

"Well-meaning, smart in appearance, very good when it comes to formal events, guaranteed to say the right thing. Shows signs of great promise, considerable flair and a real capacity for divergent thinking. Will probably be facing problems from some delinquents in the far corners of the classroom (grammar school backwoodsmen). Some interesting tests of disciplinary powers coming up (grammar schools again)."

**DAVID HART**, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers. Mark: 6 out of 10.

"The jury is out. The Government will get a lot of marks from people outside education for its drive to raise standards. But from the profession there's the distinct feeling we've been on the receiving end of a lot of pressure. Attempts to reduce bureaucracy have not worked. The end of 1998 is a defining moment in the relationship between teachers and the Government. Before the next election we will see whether the Government can deliver money in school budgets, support for a pay structure that recruits, retains and motivates and less bureaucracy."

INTERVIEWS BY LUCY HODGES

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difference

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# Meaty, Beatty, big and flouncy

Annette Bening should have had enough successful lead roles by now to convince us that she's a star in her own right. But then somebody has to go and bring up Warren... By Jeff Dawson

Woody Allen once joked that if he were reincarnated, he'd come back as Warren Beatty's finger-tips. So if you're Annette Bening, Beatty's not-quite-so-famous other half, you run the risk of always being seen in the context of a notorious husband - the woman who tamed Tinseltown's greatest playboy. And that's a shame, because the "stunning actress and superb wiggler", as the venerable critic Pauline Kael once described her, is a serious performer in her own right.

"When you're famous, you become the object of people's projections and it doesn't have a lot to do with you," she chuckles. "I mean, sometimes people think certain things that are, in fact, true; sometimes they're not. What am I gonna do? Go on every talk show and straighten everybody out about who I really am and what our relationship is really about and who tamed who?"

Not that it's a bad way to be perceived - "If I were maligned, maybe it would be harder, but people are nice" - it's just that Bening could not be further removed from a vamp if she tried. Her voice may have that Kathleen Turner-ish husk to it, but her elfin charm is far more that of Sydney Wade, the humble do-gooder she played in *The American President* - the one who had an illicit liaison with the Chief Executive before such things became fashionable.

Having kids means Bening doesn't work nearly as much as she might. Turning 40 this year has also put her at that "difficult" age when Hollywood consigns its leading ladies to the scrapheap. In which case, her new film, *The Siege*, in which she is surly and unscrubbed as a CIA agent (opposite Denzel Washington's FBI chief), is a bold venture. "It's not a romantic part, it's not a mother, it's not a sister, it's not a daughter," she says. "It's a woman who is flawed and has secrets and who's made bad choices and with all these complications. That was unusual."

*The Siege* is certainly unusual. Coming from Ed Zwick, creator of *thirtysomething* and director of thoughtful military epics such as *Glory* and *Courage Under Fire*, this film also has a political slant - what happens when martial law is declared in the Big Apple after a terrorist bombing spree. Being Hollywood, the terrorists are Arab extremists, though the film attempts to raise questions about inherent prejudice against Arabs and Muslims (who are not necessarily one and the same). Like most Hollywood big-guns, Bening is a Democratic cynic, especially when it comes to US foreign policy. "It's just so touchy to talk about any of this in the USA. It's almost impermissible."

When trailers for the film appeared in the US, juxtaposing images of prayers at mosques with New York City huses blowing up, Arab groups were not best pleased. "That's a legitimate complaint," admits Bening.



"It's not a romantic part, it's not a mother, it's not a daughter. It's a woman who's flawed": Annette Bening in 'The Siege'

"That's marketing. That's scary when you really think about it. Is that what sells a movie? The movie's not anti-Arab. I wouldn't have done it if it was. Listen, it's such a terribly, terribly serious subject. I don't mean to make light of it, but political correctness is deadly. The movie, I hope, makes people think more carefully about singling out an ethnic group."

By the time the film opened in the US, noble intentions undone with the sight of General Bruce Willis gleefully duelling up the terrorists, Arab groups began to picket cinemas. The same questions will inevitably be raised here.

"Do Islamic extremists exist in the world? Yes. Is it fair to put them in the movies? Yes. Is it good to generalise? No," insists Bening. "There is anti-Arab sentiment in this country. It's almost still politically acceptable in a way that it isn't in other groups. I hope the movie talks about that."

It's all a long way from Kansas,

where Bening was born, or San Diego, where she grew up. After starting out as a dancer, she went to theatre school in San Francisco, evolving into a stage actress who supplemented theatre work with TV work before ending up in the John Candy/Dan Aykroyd

**'Do Islamic extremists exist in the world? Yes. Is it fair to put them in the movies? Yes.'**

film *The Great Outdoors*. Next was *Valmont*, and though Milos Forman's film fared worse than Stephen Frears' rival *Dangerous Liaisons*, for which she had also auditioned, Frears kept her in mind for *The Grifters*, which garnered her a Best Supporting Actress Oscar nomination. Then came

her fateful meeting with Beatty.

Casting around for a lesser-known actress for the flashy gangster epic, *Bugsy*, Bening was courted by Beatty in both senses of the word. Despite keeping their affair quiet, however, Bening soon announced that she was pregnant and the pair got married in time for the 1992 Oscars which didn't, as predicted, yield a clutch of awards for her husband. Still, they were feted as Hollywood royalty. Tinseltown marvelling at how the ageing Lothario, who had dated most of his leading ladies, and a fair few more besides - Leslie Caron, Joan Collins, Natalie Wood, Julie Christie, Britt Ekland, Diane Keaton and Madonna - had been brought to heel.

Their next movie was the cloying *Love Affair*, which flopped badly, putting a significant dent in Beatty's viability as a leading man, although Bening bounced back with *The American President*. Pregnancies have cost Bening the Catwoman part in

*Batman Forever*, Demi Moore's role in *Disclosure* and a role in *What Dreams May Come*.

The couple's children - Isabel (11 months), Ben (three) and Kathryn (five) - have not completely dominated proceedings, though. Next comes *American Beauty* with Kevin Spacey, a version of *Hedda Gabler* on stage, and Neil Jordan's *Blue Vision*, soon to be released.

"I'm lucky, because I get to do other things. I'm an actress. If I was not able to have something separate from my husband and my children, I would be one of those women with pistols to their heads, or I would be in an asylum, or I would be having a nervous breakdown, or I would be an alcoholic, or I would be depressed."

Fortunately, she has one very big fan. "Yeah, Warren's very proud of me," she says. "He thinks I'm the best actress."

*'The Siege'* is released on 8 January

## THE 1998 ARTS QUIZ

Can you remember who caused a sensation when she disrobed on stage? All this and more in our trip through the past year  
Compiled by Jonathan Sale



LAURIE LEWIS

- Who challenges the scrotally challenged?
- Which elephant byproduct is up the wall?
- Which photographer had his decisive moment this year?
- Where can you hear (a) Val Kilmer, Ralph Fiennes, Michelle Pfeiffer, Sandra Bullock and Steve Martin (b) Woody Allen?
- Why wasn't the brilliant but obscure New York artist Nat Tate at the launch of his biography by William Boyd, with extracts read by David Bowie?
- Which unclothed actress went round and round?
- Which band is unlikely to win the MTV Award for Being Polite to Duchesses?
- What film made this year's Oscars a night to remember?
- Where won't you find Ian McKellen?
- Which Church charted?
- Where was a plan for a glass roof, to make waves on the river bank, finally shattered?
- Where were all the stops pulled out on an organist and his wife?
- What was the advice given by Derek Deane of the English National Ballet to dancers in *Romeo and Juliet* (above)?
- Where did Wings of Desire fly to?
- How did the Serpentine become a website?
- How is the Primary attraction?
- How was Sigourney Weaver left in the cold?
- What links the Battle of Waterloo and the battle of the sexes?
- Identify towns included in current show titles a) in the West Country (b) the Mid-West (c) the East (d) Scandinavia (e) largely underwater.
- Why were there bikes screeching up to the Barbican Art Gallery?
- The old showbiz maxim is: "Don't give up the day job." What regular work did Jackie Mason Jack in?
- In which Indian dish can Damien Hirst claim a one-third share?
- How is the first editor of this paper connected with blue movies?
- How did five become four but are about to become six?
- What is The Phantom Menace (and why is its trailer so popular)?
- Rex Harrison played the lead in the old film. Who plays the lead in the current musical?
- What can't be placed in front of the Royal Court Theatre?
- Which is the odd one out in the festive shows put on by the Royal Ballet at the Festival Hall: English National Ballet at the Coliseum; Birmingham Royal Ballet at the Birmingham Hippodrome; Scottish National Ballet at the Edinburgh Festival Theatre?
- How did Bitches come back from the grave?
- Which diabolical character brought home the Bacon?

## ANSWERS

1. Brian McKnight in *Little Malcolm* and his struggle against the drug trade. 2. Elephant dung is used in the work of Turner. 3. Elephant dung is used in the work of Turner. 4. In the same way as the work of Turner. 5. In the same way as the work of Turner. 6. In the same way as the work of Turner. 7. In the same way as the work of Turner. 8. In the same way as the work of Turner. 9. In the same way as the work of Turner. 10. In the same way as the work of Turner. 11. In the same way as the work of Turner. 12. In the same way as the work of Turner. 13. In the same way as the work of Turner. 14. In the same way as the work of Turner. 15. In the same way as the work of Turner. 16. In the same way as the work of Turner. 17. In the same way as the work of Turner. 18. In the same way as the work of Turner. 19. In the same way as the work of Turner. 20. In the same way as the work of Turner. 21. In the same way as the work of Turner. 22. In the same way as the work of Turner. 23. In the same way as the work of Turner. 24. In the same way as the work of Turner. 25. In the same way as the work of Turner. 26. In the same way as the work of Turner. 27. In the same way as the work of Turner. 28. In the same way as the work of Turner. 29. In the same way as the work of Turner. 30. In the same way as the work of Turner. 31. In the same way as the work of Turner. 32. In the same way as the work of Turner. 33. In the same way as the work of Turner. 34. In the same way as the work of Turner. 35. In the same way as the work of Turner. 36. In the same way as the work of Turner. 37. In the same way as the work of Turner. 38. In the same way as the work of Turner. 39. In the same way as the work of Turner. 40. In the same way as the work of Turner. 41. In the same way as the work of Turner. 42. In the same way as the work of Turner. 43. In the same way as the work of Turner. 44. In the same way as the work of Turner. 45. In the same way as the work of Turner. 46. In the same way as the work of Turner. 47. In the same way as the work of Turner. 48. In the same way as the work of Turner. 49. In the same way as the work of Turner. 50. In the same way as the work of Turner. 51. In the same way as the work of Turner. 52. In the same way as the work of Turner. 53. In the same way as the work of Turner. 54. In the same way as the work of Turner. 55. In the same way as the work of Turner. 56. In the same way as the work of Turner. 57. In the same way as the work of Turner. 58. In the same way as the work of Turner. 59. In the same way as the work of Turner. 60. In the same way as the work of Turner. 61. In the same way as the work of Turner. 62. In the same way as the work of Turner. 63. In the same way as the work of Turner. 64. In the same way as the work of Turner. 65. In the same way as the work of Turner. 66. In the same way as the work of Turner. 67. In the same way as the work of Turner. 68. In the same way as the work of Turner. 69. In the same way as the work of Turner. 70. In the same way as the work of Turner. 71. In the same way as the work of Turner. 72. In the same way as the work of Turner. 73. In the same way as the work of Turner. 74. In the same way as the work of Turner. 75. In the same way as the work of Turner. 76. In the same way as the work of Turner. 77. In the same way as the work of Turner. 78. In the same way as the work of Turner. 79. In the same way as the work of Turner. 80. In the same way as the work of Turner. 81. In the same way as the work of Turner. 82. In the same way as the work of Turner. 83. In the same way as the work of Turner. 84. In the same way as the work of Turner. 85. In the same way as the work of Turner. 86. In the same way as the work of Turner. 87. In the same way as the work of Turner. 88. In the same way as the work of Turner. 89. In the same way as the work of Turner. 90. In the same way as the work of Turner. 91. In the same way as the work of Turner. 92. In the same way as the work of Turner. 93. In the same way as the work of Turner. 94. In the same way as the work of Turner. 95. In the same way as the work of Turner. 96. In the same way as the work of Turner. 97. In the same way as the work of Turner. 98. In the same way as the work of Turner. 99. In the same way as the work of Turner. 100. In the same way as the work of Turner.

...VIVATING  
...AMA IS JUST  
...WONDERFUL...  
...ERITED, FUNNY  
...AND UPLIFTING...  
...A MOVIE OF  
...EMOTIONAL  
...DEPTH, HUMOUR  
...AND GREAT  
...HUMANITY...  
...Sharon Stone  
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...Harry Dean  
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# THE MIGHTY

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NOW SHOWING

# The Acid House

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"...a Womens Institute tea-party."

"...a tourism commercial."

"...makes a Tarantino script sound like *Beatrix Potter*."



# The drugs don't work

## THE BIG PICTURE



### ANTHONY QUINN

THE ACID HOUSE (15)  
DIRECTOR: PAUL MCGUIGAN  
STARRING: EWEN BRENNER,  
MARTIN CLUNES,  
KEVIN MCKIDD  
112 MINS

Well, it's one way to ring in the new year. Paul McGuigan's triptych of films adapted from stories by Irvine Welsh arrive like gatecrashers at a hogmanay do, the sort whose eye you'd rather not catch: raucous, tattooed, heery-breathed, radge (mad, in the local vernacular), though not without a certain profane vitality and wit. McGuigan has the unenviable task of following *Trainspotting*, Danny Boyle's high-profile adaptation of Welsh's first book, an instant cult hit whose inventiveness still reverberates through British cinema. Even the orange-and-black livery of that film's promotional poster bears an unforgettable iconographic integrity.

Confronted with largely the same milieu – the strugglers and stragglers of drab, lowlife Edinburgh – McGuigan has taken a sensible decision not to show off. Nothing in *The Acid House* matches the arresting visual cadence of Ewan McGregor taking a nosedive into a toilet bowl, yet there is a measure of *Trainspotting*'s deranged black comedy, scabrous banter and sudden violence. Regarding the last of these, it's well nigh impossible to watch the volcanic unpleasantness of Larry (Gary McCormack) raging through the middle story, "A Soft Touch", and not be reminded of the bantam aggression of Robert Carlyle's Begbie from the earlier film. It's the most realistic segment of the trio, relating the trials of Johnny (Kevin McKidd), left to mind his infant daughter while his sluttish wife Catriona



Alex Howden as Boab senior in 'The Granton Star Cause', the first part of 'The Acid House' trilogy

(Michelle Gomez) moves upstairs to service the noisy lust of his peroxide-haired neighbour, Larry. Having had his video and television appropriated by the rutting couple, the hapless cuckold suffers the final indignity of seeing a hole poked through his ceiling, swiftly followed by Larry leading an extension cable to a plug point in his living room: now he's stealing his electricity.

This anecdote of domestic rupture vigorously underlines the basic pessimism of Welsh's writing in that it portrays compassion as a weakness. Johnny learns nothing

from his humiliation; his change of heart at the story's end is not humane, just a reaffirmation that he will forever be a "soft touch". Not like Boab (Stephen McCole), subject of the first story, "The Granton Star Cause"; he, too, endures one mortification after another – dropped from the football team, dumped by his girlfriend, fired from his job and booted from the familial hearth by his parents – but, instead of crumbling under adversity, an encounter with "God" in a pub alters his whole perspective. "An'm gaunny make ye look like the dirty, lazy pest thit ye

are," God tells him, and promptly turns Boab into a fly. What follows is *Metamorphosis* crossed with a sick revenge fantasy: it feels characteristic of Welsh's sardonic humour that Boab discovers how "eating shit" – his metaphorical lot as a human – can be turned to physical advantage as an insect.

McGuigan uses harsh colour and distorting angles to convey the antic and somewhat feral turn of Welsh's imagination, though certain passages that fly off the page fail to tweak the funny bone in the same way on screen. When Boab is caught

vandalising a phone-box, for instance, he is hauled into the cells and given a savage doing over by a police sergeant. The reason? The policeman is a British Telecom shareholder, as he subsequently explains to Boab: "Ye ken, it jist goes tae show ye the effectiveness ay they privatisation policies. Ah would nivir huv reacted like that if ye had smashed up a phone-box when they were nationalised." The sudden change of register from demotic to officialese which is effected so wittily in prose seems cumbersome (and not very amusing) in the film.

Welsh's sentences aren't exactly resistant to screen translation: it's just that their music goes missing. This is further evidenced in the concluding story, another grotesque fantasia of displacement in which a football hooligan named Coco (played with manic abandon by Ewen Bremner) has a supercharged acid trip on the night of a violent electrical storm and winds up trapped in the body of an infant newly born to a middle-class couple (Jemma Redgrave and Martin Clunes). Coco lies helpless in a hospital bed, his responses apparently regressing to the

level of a new-born baby. Again, Welsh's comedy of language – a bairn who talks in the broken glass accent of a Hibs supporter – is rendered too explicitly as a body-swap nightmare, with a Chucky doll performing the role of demon baby. It encapsulates the problem which a book like *The Acid House* presents to the filmmaker. While Paul McGuigan's adaptation thrums with a sort of gleeful disgust, it feels oddly compromised, and says little about the druggy squalor of Edinburgh's low-rent hinterland that *Trainspotting* hasn't already covered.

## ALSO SHOWING

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION JONATHAN FRANKS (PG) ■ SITCOM FRANÇOIS OZON (18)

FROM THE annals of intergalactic pioneering comes another *Star Trek* movie, with Captain Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart) still baldly leading where most of the series has only been. *Star Trek: Insurrection* is no more than a feature-length episode garnished with pricey special effects, but as long as you don't mind the formula – confrontation with a race of tyrannical expansionists, Picard and his crew put to the test, edifying spectacle of multicultural harmony re-established – it makes for an amiable, undemanding entertainment.

This time the plot concerns a rural utopia where the Ba'ku lead a life of nouveau-hippie contentment. It's like Palm Springs without the zimmer frames, for the Ba'ku inhabit an atmosphere that reverses the ageing process. Under the pretence of a cultural survey, a hostile tribe called the Son'a aim to get their arthritic hands on a piece of this age-free paradise, thus ensuring their own longevity and sparing their leader, Ru'fo, whose skin is as grey and wrinkly as an elephant's backside, the inconvenience of another facelift. Naturally, Picard comes to the rescue of the

beautiful people, and indeed finds his heart captured by a Ba'ku woman, Anij (Donna Murphy), despite her being more than 300 years old. Directed by Jonathan Franks, the film occasionally takes a time-out from the earnest cosmic hand-wringing for some light-hearted fun. I enjoyed the moment when Picard and the *Enterprise*'s whey-faced android Data (Brent Spiner) did an impromptu duet from Gilbert and Sullivan, though for all it added to the plot it might as well have been Gilbert and George. Stewart retains a suave authority as Picard, and F Murray Abraham as Ru'fo glowers convincingly beneath his latex mask. How much longer the film-makers will continue remaking this space-age morality play is uncertain, though I can imagine it outstripping the lifespan of your average Ba'ku.

François Ozon's debut feature, *Sitcom*, is a heavy-handed French farce that will irritate according to taste. Set within the claustrophobic confines of a bourgeois household, it recounts the way a pet rat upsets the equilibrium of an apparently respectable family. First the son announces he's gay; then the daughter turns suicidal. Their mother, neglected by her frigid husband, decides to try her hand at incest, while the Spanish housekeeper exercises her wiles upon the daughter's boyfriend. Ozon appears to be making it up as he goes along, while the cast mug through the Almodovarian antics as best they can, and looked to be every bit as relieved as I was when it came to a halt.

All films are on release from tomorrow

★★★★★  
"DELICIOUS"  
Damon Smith, *Attitude*

★★★★★  
"WONDERFULLY mischievous and refreshingly WICKED"  
Beth Williams, *Maxim*

"An OUTRAGEOUS black farce with a wicked, MANIC energy"  
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### DOUBLE BILL

PAUL MCGUIGAN, DIRECTOR OF 'THE ACID HOUSE' ON HIS IDEAL CINEMATIC PAIRING

CHITTY CHITTY BANG (KEN HUGHES, 1968)  
GET CARTER (MIKE HODGES, 1971)

*CHITTY CHITTY Bang* is one of my favourite films. It is a cute musical. But it's more of a spooky fairy tale. You never know where, or at what time, it's set. It uses such simple effects but they have a great impact. It's one of those things I liked as a child and my son, Seamus, who is four and a half, went through six months of watching it at least once a week.

There are these really, really surreal bits; for instance, the child catcher. I don't know if there has ever been such an evil character in a children's film. He does that brilliant little dance and then there is his sweetie truck. It was probably quite innocent,

but now you think of this man enticing children into his car with sherbets and it's actually very horrible. As a film-maker, I would love to do a kid's movie. I know people would think that's strange, but it would be a great challenge to keep them entertained.

In *Get Carter*, Michael Caine plays a London gangster who goes to Newcastle because his brother has been killed there. He wants to discover why and he finds out that his niece has been forced into making a porn movie. The film's style is modern and urban and its use of location is amazing, especially in the final scene where Caine is chased around a slag heap. Like *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, it's a very modern way of film making.

INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER RODGER

## AN ENEMY THEY CAN'T SEE.

## A NATION UNDER SIEGE.

## A CRISIS THEY CAN'T CONTROL.

DENZEL WASHINGTON · ANNETTE BENING  
**THE SIEGE** 15  
AND BRUCE WILLIS

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## NEW YEAR'S EVE TELEVISION

THE THURSDAY REVIEW  
The Independent 31 December 1986

## PETER CONCHIE

## TELEVISION REVIEW



HOLIDAYS PROVIDE the chance to sit down with something expensive, like a long novel or history book - an opportunity seized with varying degrees of success by the colour drama departments.

This year, BBC1 presented *The Boy, the Bitch and the Bird*, a predictable title of dramatic note. Meanwhile, BBC2 followed their impressive adaptation of Henry James's *The American* on Boxing Day with *A Reader's Digest*.

This was badly lagged as "new drama". In light of this claim, several facts are perhaps best overlooked: first of all, it was an adaptation, secondly, it was dramatised by prizewinning playwright Caryl Churchill. What's more, it starred those famous old prizes Tom Courtenay and Albert Finney (last seen together in the West End play *Art*), alongside Joanna Lumley. A case of new drama, old faces.

Angela Lambert's story is essentially lightweight, a period piece on loss, class and old age, which Davies, to his credit, fleshed up considerably. Courtenay was wonderful as Roy Southgate, an ex-millman who was widowed on the same night as Scotland Yard's first sergeant, Cunningham-Lewis. The two lonely old men, engaged by a social worker, ended up sharing Finney's empty country house with Southgate effectively a servant.

The manner of the details of Reggie and Southgate's wives, within minutes on the same hospital ward, was used as a macabre device to define the surviving partners' social standing. The milk's misadventure, a ragged, rattling exit, while the squadron leader's spouse didn't want any fuss, and crawled quietly without so much as a fig on the bedside emergency cot.

Lumley's performance as a gold-digger was enthralling, if a little uneven. The make-up department had done something clever with blusher which aged her disconcertingly, although, ironically, Lumley was playing a character roughly her own age. As a selectee she is still superb, with an alluring ability to dandle her pupils on one like a cat. There were some early Dennis Potter touches, which directed to dominate the work. While it must be bitterly hard to re-create a

novelistic flashback of grief and bereavement, at times Davies used the technique as a convenient dramatic shortcut. Both Reggie and Southgate were frequently flown back to their youth, where they opened doors on a past peopled with ghosts which required rather too readily to the subsequent scene.

There was some movingly sparse dialogue, such as the exchange after Southgate looks at an early morning phone call. Reggie stood symbolically at the top of the stairs. "It was the prison, my son's death. Can I take the car?" The phrases were weighed beautifully, punctuated by an unspoken and poignant telegrammatic "stop". All told, it was a rather bland hospital, Reggie blathered to his dying wife. "We met in one," she replied.

Another habitually male environment, formed the backdrop for a contemplative edition of *Garden Doctors* (CA). It would have been impractical and unedifying to rush an order of Benedictine monks into finishing their tea, let alone landscaping a garden, something recognised in the first of a two-part garden programme, *Gardeners' World*, on the Isle of Wight.

The brothers were not in a hurry, tending corners, moustaches and taking a head trip to the mainland before they consented, but, given the impatient demands of the make-over format, I was concerned on their behalf. Perhaps they would awake at dawn to find objects painted in theatrical colours or a bald patch woven into the black patch lawn. Presenter-designer Paul Thompson was severely himself, and humiliated the monks, who were given the courtesy of a proper introduction, and were conversed with rather than asked the usual

crisis questions. One was an ex-leecher, another once worked in the music industry. "My mother became a monk," one chimed, "but I suppose all of mothers are disappointed with their daughters." It was heavily about gardening at all, but when, at last, a sketch was painted, it sounded divine: separate squares of contemplation colour-washed by quince blossom in spring and pale blue lilies in summer.

## BBC1

## BBC2

## ITV Carlton

## Channel 4

## Channel 5

**7.30 Children's BBC** Puddingtime (P) (673282), 7.45

**10.30 The World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 11.00 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 11.15 **News** (S) (725288), 11.30 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 11.45 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 12.00 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 12.15 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 12.30 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 12.45 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 1.00 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 1.15 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 1.30 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 1.45 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 2.00 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 2.15 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 2.30 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 2.45 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 3.00 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 3.15 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 3.30 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 3.45 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 4.00 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 4.15 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 4.30 **World's Strongest Man** (S) (725288), 4.45 **Blue Peter** (S) (725288), 5.00 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